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LIVERPOOL FC



JORDAN HENDERSON

New year, new hope, new goals.
The captain's message for the fans

YNWA
GERRY MARSDEN

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THE FAMOUS KOPITES WILL BE BACK

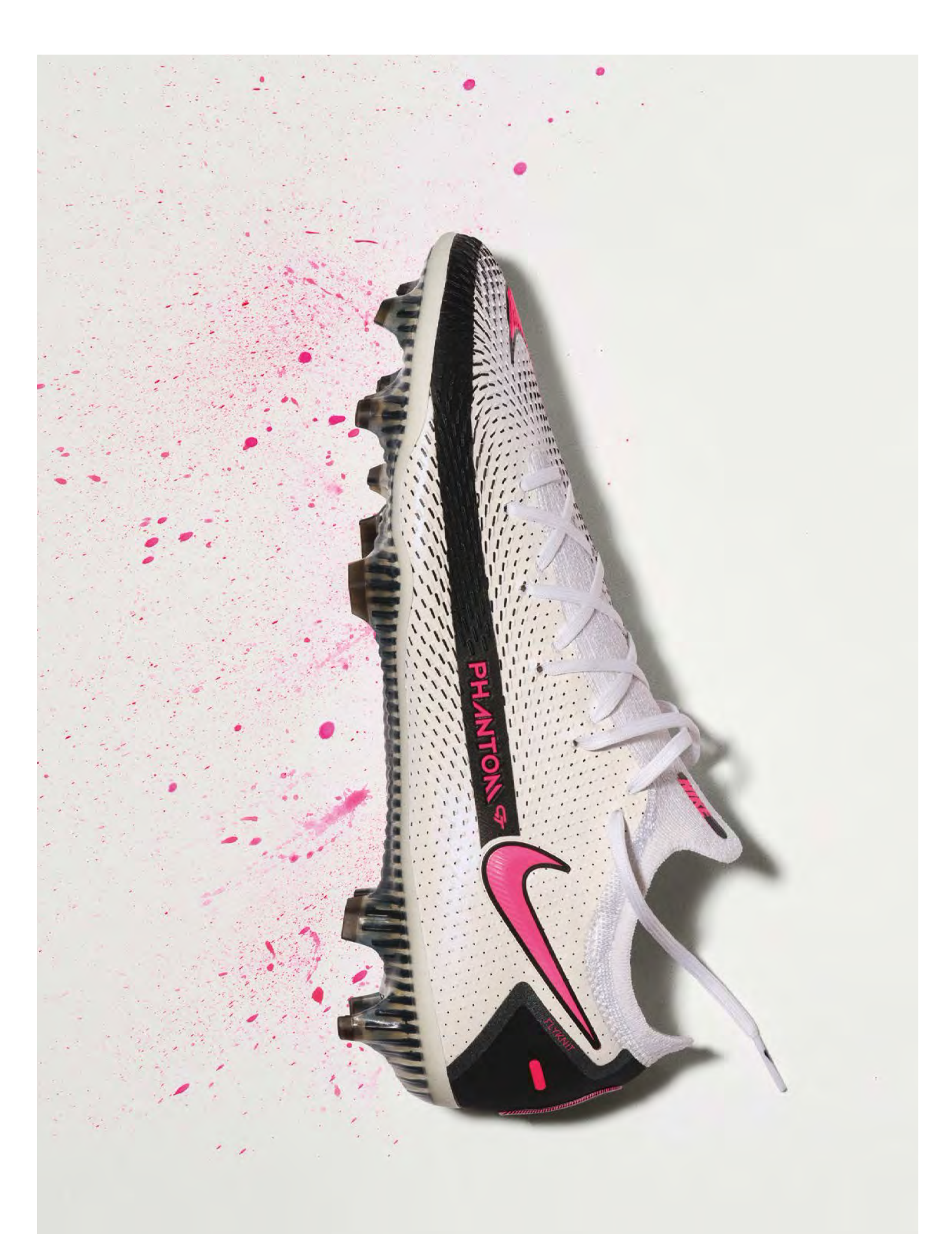
A proud Kopite shows his support for the Reds during the 1-1 Premier League draw with West Bromwich Albion. Sadly, the new national lockdown means there will be no supporters allowed inside Anfield for the foreseeable future as 2021 began with all Premier League and FA Cup fixtures being played behind closed doors. Everyone connected with Liverpool Football Club thanks our fans for their continued backing and asks that you would continue to support us safely. YNWA.



FULLY FOCUSED ON THE TASK AHEAD

Jürgen Klopp observes the Crystal Palace squad warm-up ahead of last month's Premier League clash at Selhurst Park. It proved to be a record-breaking day for Klopp and his team as the Reds recorded a 7-0 victory in south London, Liverpool FC's biggest-ever top-flight away win. "Everything is pleasing; everything is good about this game," Klopp said afterwards, before going on to stress that the reward for that win was still only three points and that the Reds' focus was on remaining competitive throughout the second half of the campaign. "The majority of the season is still to come, so we just have to be ready on each matchday to find a way to win that specific game," he added. "We will try it with all we have but we will see [where that takes us] later on this season."




PHANTOM GT

“There are more important things in life than football, but I hope 2021 brings more happy memories for more people”

Liverpool captain Jordan Henderson reflects on an astonishing 12 months and vows to keep giving everything for manager, team and fans




14
L.F.C.

Words: Chris McLoughlin

If years were ranked by the good old footballing cliché of rollercoasters, then for Liverpool supporters 2020 would go down as The Big One.

After 30 years of trying, the Reds finally won the big one by becoming Premier League champions, yet the only people allowed on the Kop to celebrate the triumph were the men that had won it.

Then, as the year ended in tiers with Liverpool again top of the table, the joy felt by the 2,000 supporters who attended home games against Wolves, Spurs and West Bromwich Albion was snatched away from others with the announcement of a new national lockdown on the fourth day of 2021.

The difference this time is that elite football continues...and those who wanted the 2019/20 season declared null-and-void seem to have lost their voices. Wonder why?

For Jordan Henderson, 2020 will be remembered as a year of career highs. He began it as captain of the Champions League, UEFA Super Cup and FIFA Club World Cup holders, became the first Liverpool skipper to lift the Premier League trophy in the middle of it and was named as FWA Footballer of the Year, and ended the year as runner-up in the BBC Sports Personality of the Year contest.

Yet when Henderson is asked to reflect on 2020 as a year for him, Liverpool's captain-with-a-conscience has his mind on the bigger picture.

"2020 was quite a year," he says. "It was a rollercoaster, especially for us. The high of winning the Premier League – something you dreamt of doing for your whole career – was an amazing achievement, but I also understand that there are more important things than football in life.

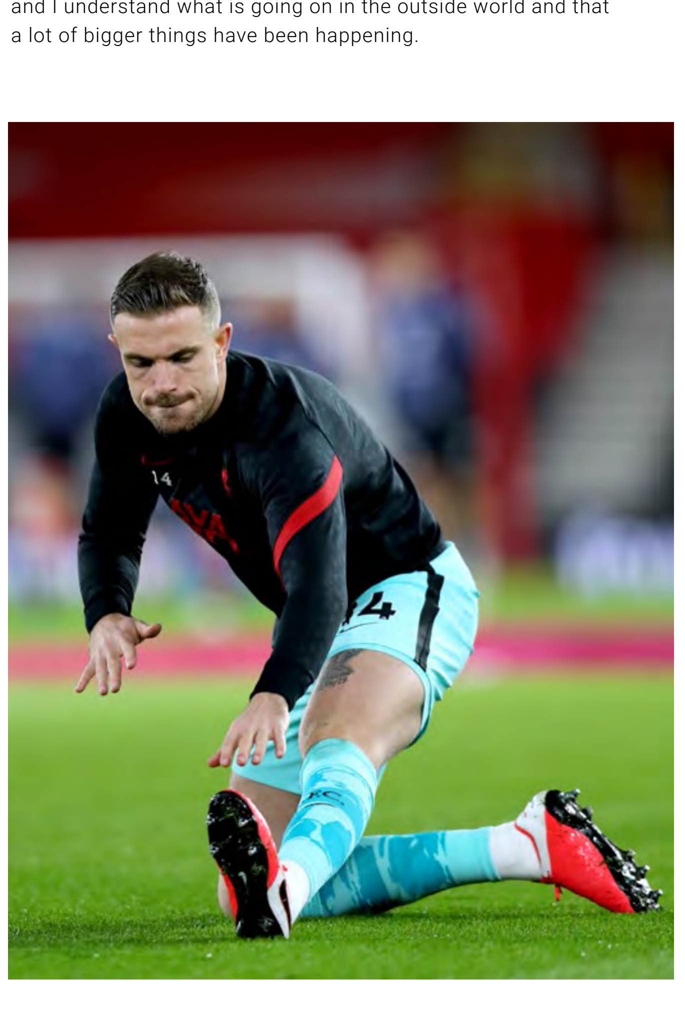
"A lot of people suffered in 2020 with the pandemic. It has been difficult, whether directly or indirectly, for a lot of people and I understand what is going on in the outside world and that a lot of bigger things have been happening.

"It puts everything into perspective. You've got to enjoy things but family and health are the most important things. I think you've got to appreciate those things even more.

"So 2020 was a difficult year for everyone, but I hope 2021 brings more happy memories for more people and that normality can come back in some sense."

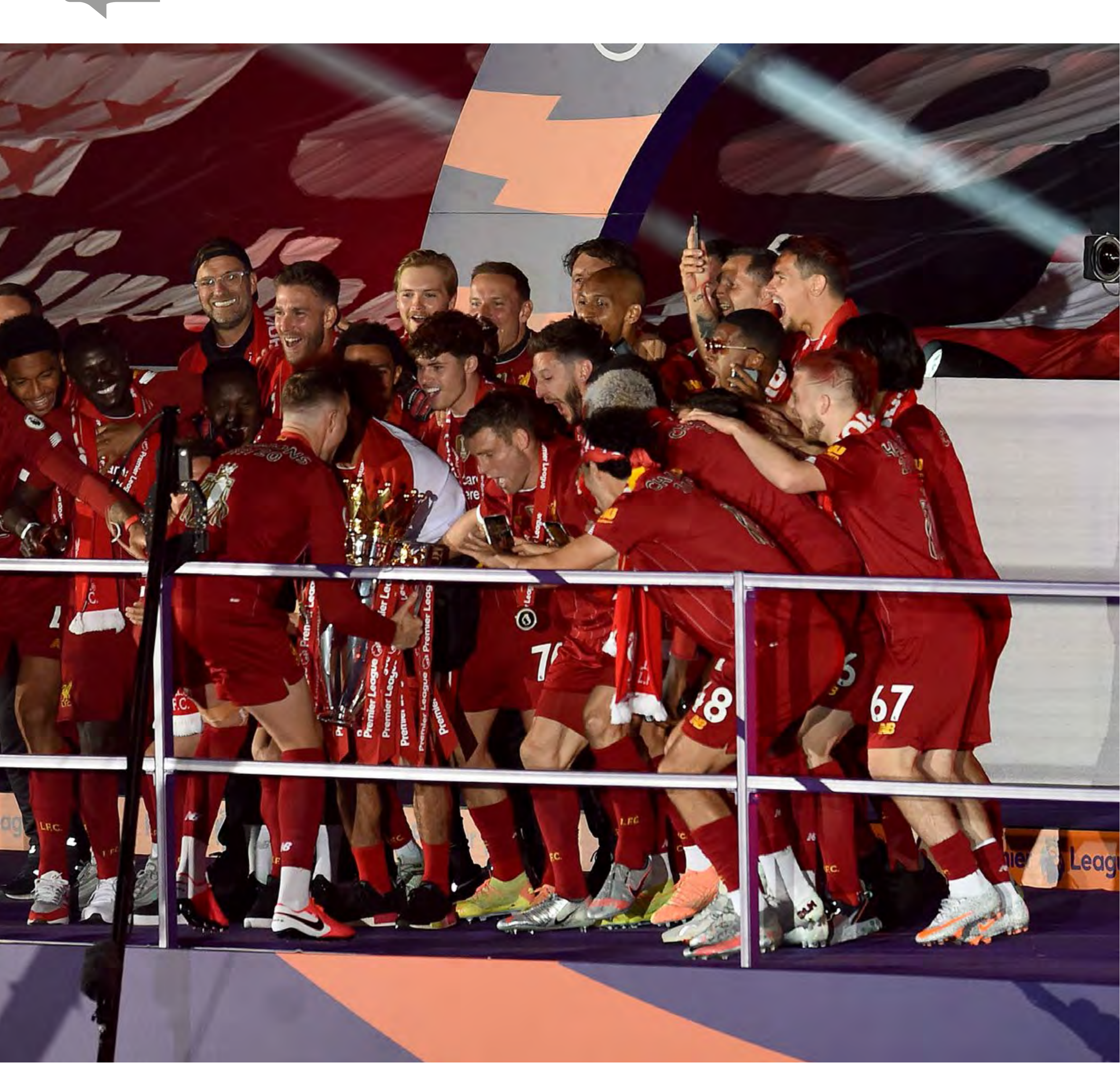
He's right, of course. The end of the coronavirus pandemic, and a return of the Reds playing in front of a full house at Anfield, cannot come soon enough. Yet despite the circumstances, for a Liverpool captain to finally be lifting the Premier League trophy at Anfield was a moment in time to savour, wherever you watched it from.

"It was a very special moment," says Henderson, "not only for me but all the lads – a moment that we will remember forever, I'm sure. It was something we had dreamt of as kids, so you can imagine the feeling when we were lifting the trophy.





IT WAS A VERY SPECIAL MOMENT. NOT ONLY FOR ME BUT ALL THE LADS – A MOMENT THAT WE WILL REMEMBER FOREVER, I'M SURE. IT WAS SOMETHING WE HAD DREAMT OF AS KIDS, SO YOU CAN IMAGINE THE FEELING WHEN WE WERE LIFTING THE TROPHY




William HILL
FWA
DIOR

I DON'T FEEL LIKE I CAN ACCEPT THIS ON MY OWN. I ACCEPT IT ON BEHALF OF THIS WHOLE SQUAD, BECAUSE WITHOUT THEM I'M NOT IN A POSITION TO BE RECEIVING THIS HONOUR

"Of course, we would have preferred the fans to be in there with us. Unfortunately we couldn't have that, but it was a proud moment for us all to achieve what we did.

"I'm proud of everything from last season in terms of the way we played, the mentality and the resilience that we showed throughout the season. We gave absolutely everything and got what we deserved at the end."

Henderson missed Liverpool's 5-3 win against Chelsea on Champions Coronation Day with a knee injury that, for a while, even threatened the famous 'Hendo Shuffle' from taking place on the specially-constructed podium on the Kop.

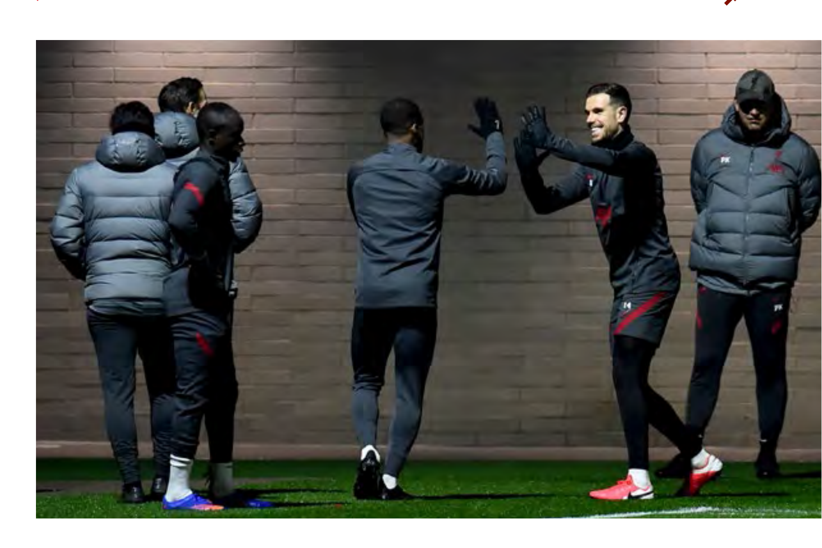
Thankfully that wasn't the case, but just to be on the safe side Jordan practised the trophy-lift at Melwood with a couple of pieces of gym equipment – that hadn't been engraved or had red ribbons attached – standing in for the Premier League trophy.

"I injured my knee against Brighton so I wasn't sure I was going to be able to do the shuffle, which everyone wanted us to do. People were saying 'you've got to do it, you've got to do it,' so as part of my rehab the day before I was doing it with dumbbells just to make sure my knee could hold up!

"On the night I got it strapped up because I needed to do it – there were too many people asking us to do it, so I needed to do it."

Henderson got his hands on two other trophies in 2020. As well as deservedly being named as FWA Footballer of the Year, he finished as runner-up to Lewis Hamilton in the BBC Sports Personality of the Year awards. Critics would say that Hamilton's car is the star, but then Henderson would argue the same about the Liverpool team.

"I don't feel like I can accept this on my own," he said after being named as Footballer of the Year. "I accept it on behalf of this whole squad, because without them I'm not in a position to be receiving this honour.



"Individual awards are nice and they are special and I will cherish this one. But an individual award without the collective achievement wouldn't mean anywhere near as much to me – if anything at all."

It is a similar story when he is asked about his BBC Sports Personality nomination. "Yes, it was a huge honour to even be nominated alongside the other people. It was a bit strange for me, really, as I'm not used to being nominated for individual stuff.

"It's team awards that I'm focused on and driven by. At the same time I was really humbled and honoured to be nominated and finish as runner-up, but it was more important that we got the three points against Crystal Palace on the Saturday."

That 7-0 victory at Selhurst Park – a club-record away win in the top-flight – seemed to signal that the Reds were running into the form that took them clear of the pack last season, yet disappointing draws against West Brom and Newcastle followed, before a rare defeat at Southampton.

Henderson expected there to be bumps in the road – or





WE HAD A GOOD PERIOD AFTERWARDS AND I THINK THE MANAGER IS GOOD AT USING DIFFICULT MOMENTS FOR US TO LEARN FROM TO MAKE SURE THEY DON'T HAPPEN AGAIN

should that be on the road – before they came along and is philosophical about how the season has gone so far.

"It is a different season and different to any other season. This year, with the pandemic and no fans for most games, it has been different, but I think everybody has coped with it as best they can. It's a bit tighter than maybe it was at this stage last season, but what happened last season doesn't happen all the time.

"You can't do what we did last season all the time, so as a team we're just focusing on ourselves and how we can improve – how we can be better – to get three points in every game we play.

"We'll see where that takes us, but we're in a good position and hopefully we can reinforce that and get some good results in the new year.

"It's very competitive, of course, and maybe we've seen more surprising results so far this season compared to the last year or so. But that's the beauty of the Premier League – any team can beat anyone on any given day. Other teams have got better and have been improving.

"We know that and we respect our opponents, no matter what position they are in the league. That will always be the case for us as a team and we'll always try to give everything no matter who we are playing."

Liverpool's 1-0 reverse at St Mary's was only their second Premier League defeat of the season, the other coming at Aston Villa. We won't mention the score, but talk of that game does provide Henderson with the opportunity to give some insight into how Jürgen Klopp and his players react to a defeat.

"We haven't really had many of those moments in the last few years so it was a kick in the teeth, but this team is all about dealing with setbacks – dealing with situations that are uncomfortable and difficult. It was all about our reaction after that and I think the players handled it brilliantly and reacted really well by using the disappointment and frustration of that game to go forward.

"We had a good period afterwards and I think the manager is good at using difficult moments for us to learn from to make sure they don't happen again.

"It doesn't matter if we've been winning every week, we've had a bad defeat or whatever – he expects the highest of standards every day in training. We've got a way of playing and if we're not meeting those standards then he'll be the first one to tell us.

"Whether we're in a good run of form or not, it doesn't make a difference. It's all about: are we doing everything we can to keep our performance level as high as it should be? That's the main thing he focuses on every day.

"Yes, he does shout and he can be intense at times, but during games I'd say he is quite calm at half-time regardless of how the game is going because he likes to get his points over and he needs to make sure everybody is understanding that for the second half."

Klopp is well known for asking his players to train as hard as



WHEN YOU WIN A TROPHY IT IS EVEN HARDER TO RETAIN IT THE NEXT YEAR. IT'LL BE VERY DIFFICULT, BUT WE KNEW THAT AT THE START OF THE SEASON

they play and in Henderson he has a captain with a work-ethic that has never diminished during his nine-and-a-half years as a Liverpool player. The 30-year-old skipper still runs as hard in a red shirt as he did when he was 21 and says it is down to his insatiable desire to win.

"A lot of it [work-ethic] comes through experiences that I've been through as a kid, as a player and a desire to win, I suppose. Ever since I was a kid I've wanted to win, whether it was football, other sports I played or whatever it may be. I've always had something that has made me want to win and I've never taken kindly to losing.

"I've maybe learned how to cope with losing a little bit better as time has gone on, but it still isn't nice and I try to put everything into playing football. I've dedicated my life for a large amount of time because I love doing what I do.

"I want to be the best I can be to help the team achieve big things going forward and that has been the case since I was little."

Retaining the Premier League title is one of the 'big things' that Henderson and his team-mates are targeting. In a condensed season disrupted by serious injuries to key players, that is no easy task, nor would it have been if Virgil van Dijk, Joe Gomez, Thiago and Diogo Jota – to name just four – hadn't been forced onto the sidelines for significant periods of time.

When you are champions, you're a prized scalp. When you've won the Premier League by beating all 19 of your opponents – and taking just 24 games to do so – you've got an even bigger target on your backs.

Liverpool's rivals spent most of last season being reminded how far behind the Reds they were and, while it may be something of a lesser-mentioned factor, the motivation to not let that happen again is real. Even Southampton boss Ralph Hasenhuttl admitted he'd "have taken a point" after their victory against the Reds, meaning Liverpool are now going into most games facing opponents with a don't-lose mentality.

Add to all of that the fact that some teams have improved their squads and gelled better and it's no wonder that Henderson has been thinking all season that winning the league is trickier second time around.

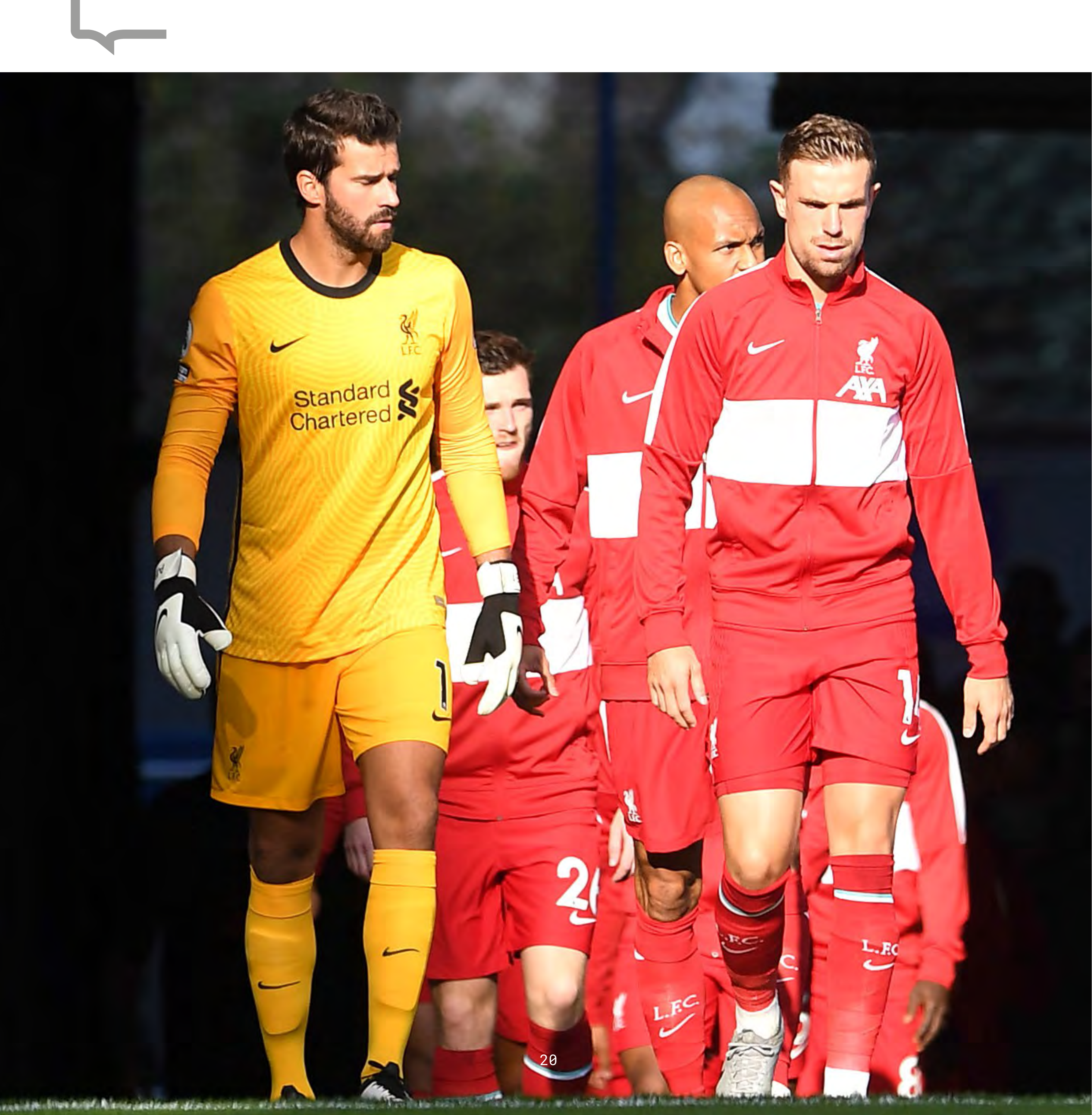
"When you win a trophy it is even harder to retain it the next year. It'll be very difficult, but we knew that at the start of the season. Other teams have improved, other teams are playing well and will challenge right until the end of the season.

"Obviously this season is unique with the pandemic and the




L.F.C.
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AXA

EVEN WITH A COUPLE OF THOUSAND OF FANS IN, I STILL THINK IT MADE A BIG DIFFERENCE. IT HELPED US TO HAVE THEM BACK IN, AND FINGERS CROSSED IT'LL NOT BE LONG BEFORE WE CAN GET MORE IN AND HOPEFULLY FILL ANFIELD OUT SOONER RATHER THAN LATER



different circumstances, but at the end of the day our focus is on training as hard as we possible can, staying focused on what we want to achieve and giving everything for the 90 minutes when we play to get three points.

"That's what we try to do in every game, no matter what competition it is, and it's put us in good stead."

As ever, he also has the wider perspective in mind. "I know it's been difficult for the fans, not only dealing with the pandemic but Liverpool fans had to watch us play and watch us win the league without being there. That will have been tough.

"Some of our fans had been to every home and away game for years and years, so to wait 30 years for us to win the league and not be there when we lifted it must have been pretty hard.

"We just can't wait to have them back in the stadium properly, with a full capacity, and have that moment with them because it will be special and they certainly deserve it.

"Even with a couple of thousand of fans in, I still think it made a big difference. It helped us to have them back in, and fingers crossed it'll not be long before we can get more in and hopefully fill Anfield out sooner rather than later."

Season 2020/21 is Henderson's tenth as a Liverpool player and, fitness permitting, he's on course to pass the 400 appearances mark for the club later in the year. His goal in the 7-0 win against Crystal Palace was his 30th for the Reds – continuing his record of scoring in every season he has played in – and, at the time of writing, he is only 13 games short of captaining Liverpool for the 200th time.

To put that into perspective, 1986 double-winning skipper Alan Hansen wore the armband 195 times while only Steven Gerrard, Ron Yeats and Emlyn Hughes have skippered Liverpool on more than 300 occasions.

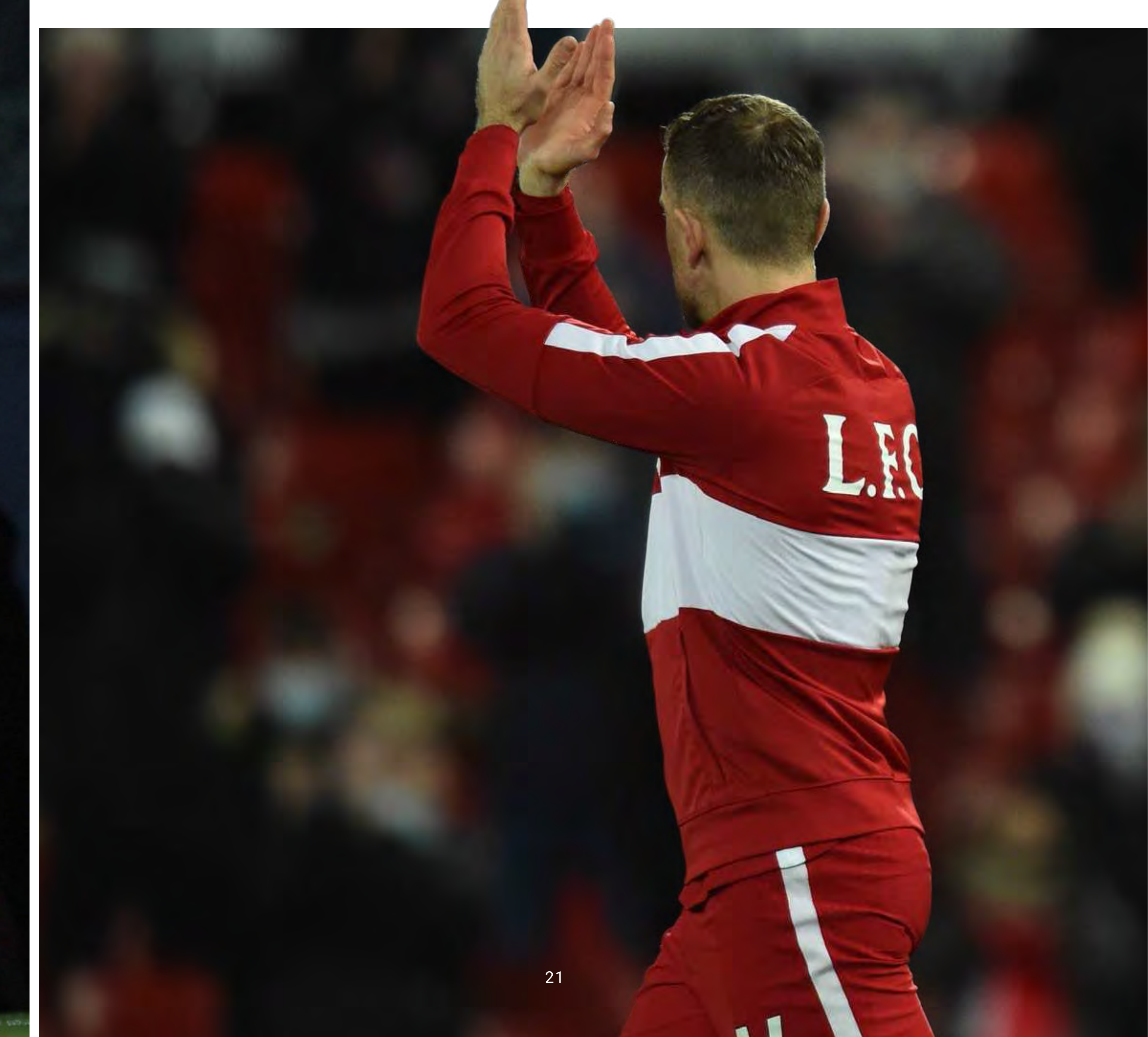
Henderson will always be a Sunderland supporter – he even sat in the Sunderland end in a black hoodie for the 2014 League Cup final against Manchester City at Wembley. But even when he one day leaves Liverpool, he says that Liverpool will never leave him.

"I've been here so long that I feel this football club is certainly part of me and will be for the rest of my life. I'll continue to give everything I have right until I'm not here any more.

"I've done that since the day I walked in here. I've given absolutely everything and I'll continue to do that until the last day.

"A lot of people have asked me how I want to be remembered here? To be honest, the most important thing is to be remembered as someone who gave everything for the football club and helped others around him to improve."

That is already guaranteed, no matter where the footballing rollercoaster takes Liverpool and Jordan Henderson in 2021.





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Jumping at his chance

Liverpool fans were given a boost when summer signing Thiago Alcantara returned to action as a substitute during the 0-0 draw at Newcastle in the Reds' final game of 2020. The Spanish schemer had been ruled out since being injured in the Merseyside derby at Goodison Park in October.



Fantastic Mr Ox

Another welcome return during December saw Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain back in the red shirt. The midfielder came on as a sub during the 7-0 win at Crystal Palace, marking the occasion with a goalscoring assist for Mo Salah. After another sub appearance against West Brom, he started for the first time since July when named in the eleven for the PL game at Southampton on 4 January.

SCORING



FOR FUN

Liverpool's 7-0 win at Crystal Palace was a club-record top-flight away victory, taking its place among LFC's top six all-time record wins at the highest level



Liverpool 7 Stoke City 0

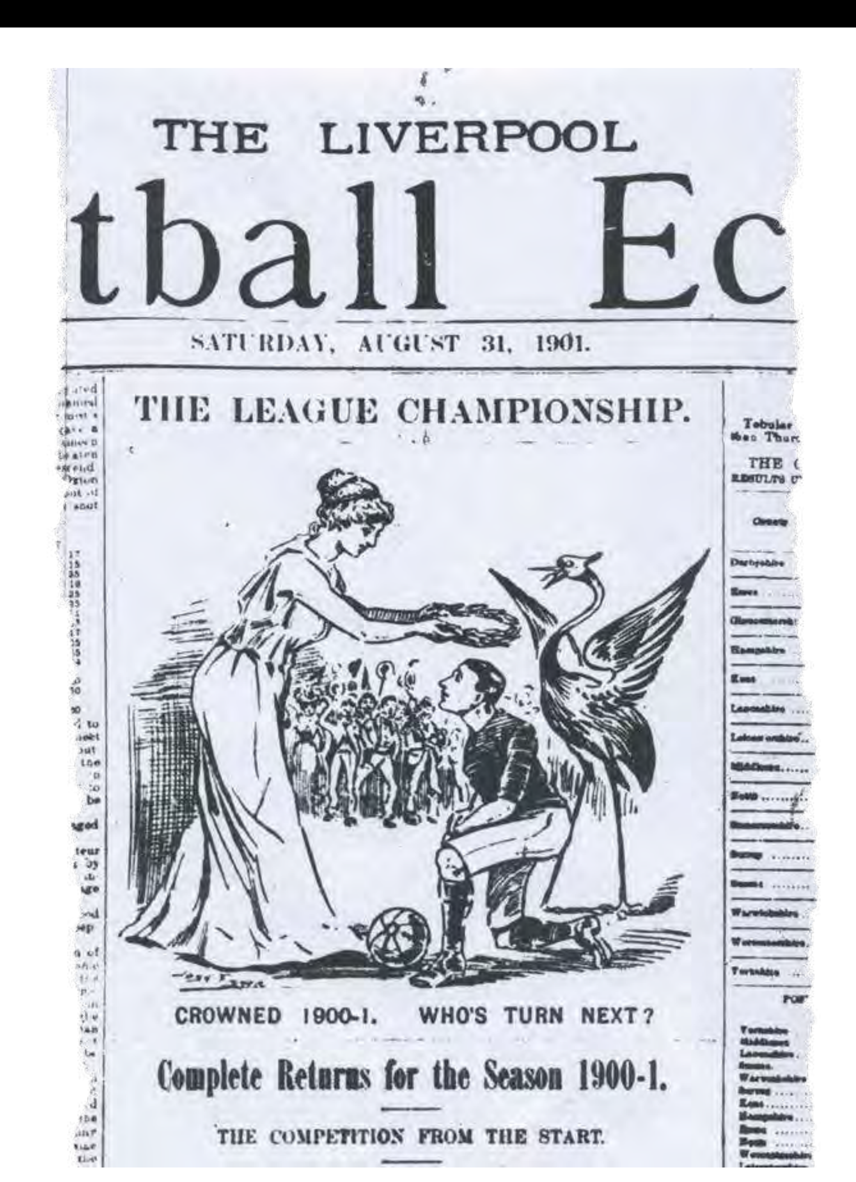
First Division 4 January 1902

Liverpool's first top-flight win by seven goals came early in the 20th century but also carries an asterisk – visitors Stoke City certainly felt there was something fishy about proceedings!

On the face of it, the result reflects a dominant display from the home side, with Scottish striker Andy McGuigan becoming the first Reds player to score five goals in a league game. But that doesn't begin to tell the whole story as the Potters found the scoreline hard to stomach, literally – suffering as they were from food-poisoning after eating fish prior to the match. Several of their side had to leave the field mid-action and at one point there were only seven Stoke players left!

The *Liverpool Echo* reported: "There were no less than six alterations to the Stoke team from that which was advertised. It transpired that just before the teams were due on the field, two or three Stoke players were seriously indisposed but they pluckily turned out with their comrades."

The *Echo* headlines proclaimed, 'Extraordinary attacks of sickness', 'The Stoke team depleted', 'Goalkeeper and several others retire' and 'Liverpool forwards have an afternoon out.' A cartoon in the paper portrayed a Stoke player, drawn as a clay pot after the club's nickname, taunted by a fish saying: 'Have another before you go!'



THE LIVERPOOL

tball Ec

SATURDAY, AUGUST 31, 1901.

THE LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP.

CROWNED 1900-1. WHO'S TURN NEXT?

Complete Returns for the Season 1900-1.

THE COMPETITION FROM THE START.





18

THURSDAY—THE DAILY COURIER—DECEMBER 27, 1928.

Liverpool's Sensational 8-0 Win Over Burnley

Rugby Union.

PARK SURPRISE LEICESTER.

Backs Pave the Way to an Away Victory.

WATERLOO WIN.

THREE "RED" GOALS DISALLOWED AND PENALTY KICK MISSED AT ANFIELD.

Within Shooting Distance of Old Second Division Record; Three by Hodgson and Two Each by Clark and Edmed.

League—Division III (N.).

DOUBLE FOR CREWE.

New Brighton Defeated Each Day.

WREXHAM VICTORY

Liverpool 8 Burnley 0

First Division 26 December 1928

While much has been made of this season's fixture congestion, it used to be commonplace for teams to play on Christmas Day and Boxing Day – often against the same opponents. On this occasion the Reds walloped the Clarets 8-0 at Anfield 24 hours after losing 3-2 at Turf Moor.

The teams appeared evenly-matched going into the first game, Liverpool sitting ninth in the table and Burnley tenth, both with 21 points. The hosts won to leapfrog George Patterson's Livers.

Both teams made a couple of changes, including a switch of goalie, when they reconvened at Anfield less than 24 hours later, and it turned out to be a torrid afternoon for Burnley keeper George Sommerville.

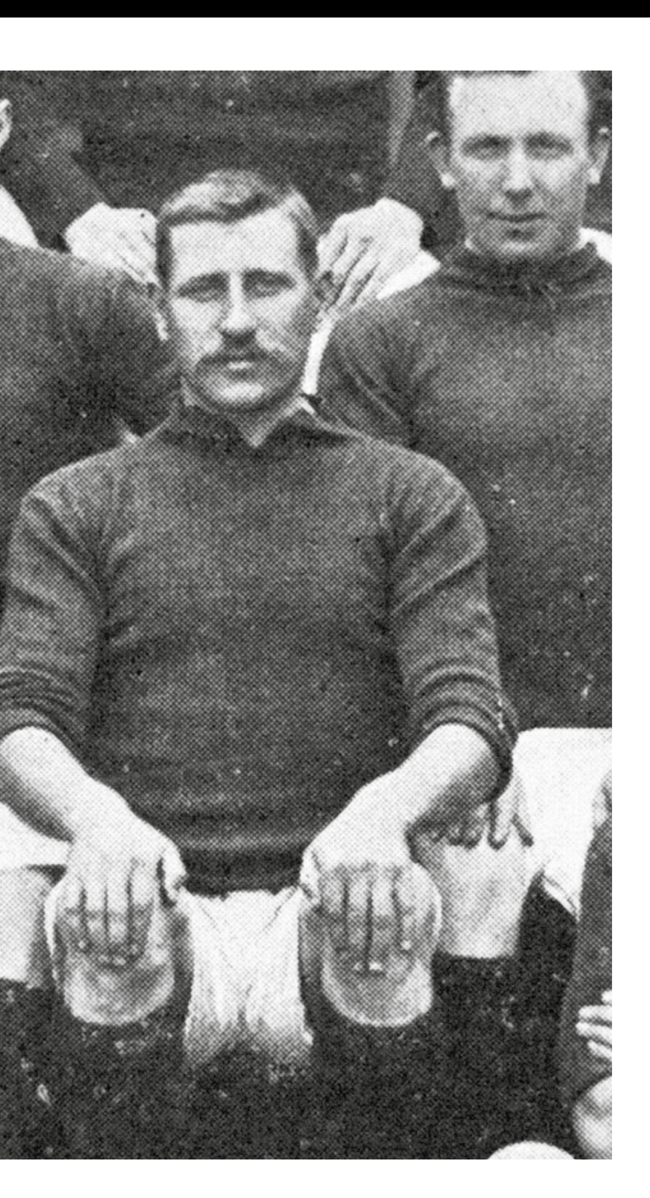
Liverpool had beaten Portsmouth 8-2 at Anfield the previous season, but Burnley were left stunned as the rampant Reds put eight past them without reply. It could've been nine but for defender Bob Done failing to beat Sommerville from the spot.

The prolific Gordon Hodgson scored a hat-trick with powerful striker Bob Clark and winger Dick Edmed – Liverpool's scorers in Lancashire the previous day – both scoring twice and forward Bill Salisbury completing the rout.

Clark's display won plenty of plaudits, although the 14-stone Geordie's dribbling skills delighted and exasperated in equal measure. "He would dribble round his own side, the referee and anyone else between him and goal," noted the *Liverpool Echo*. "Dribbling is a joy to watch when Clark is in this mood, although the crowd at times do not echo my enthusiasm when he goes backward to go around the same player twice or even thrice."

The city's *Evening Express* wrote: "Liverpool deserve to be popular this season. Whether they win or lose they are always triers and their displays are nothing if not wholehearted.

"[Gordon] Hodgson is becoming almost as much of a hero as Dixie Dean. It was a jubilant holiday crowd and the fare provided was most exhilarating."



Liverpool 9 Grimsby Town 2

First Division 6 December 1902

Talking of fish – sort of – at the other end of 1902 the Reds almost hit double-figures in a top-flight league game against Grimsby Town, aka the Mariners.

They were leading 9-2 when Scottish forward George Livingstone had Grimsby keeper Walter Whittaker picking the ball out of his net for a tenth time – only for match officials to deem his effort offside. So Tom Watson's men had to settle for nine.

Prolific forward Sam Raybould (left) scored 31 league goals in the 1902/03 season and helped himself to four in this game. There were doubles for veteran wingers Edgar Chadwick (below right) and fellow wideman Arthur Goddard (below middle) while Livingstone was also on the scoresheet with a legitimate effort.

"There is no mistake about it, when the Liverpool forwards are in a scoring mood they can get goals with a vengeance," reported the *Lancashire Evening Post*. "Chadwick got two of the goals against Grimsby [and] he was as pleased with the ball as a baby with its rattle, though not perhaps for the same reason – the rattle is new to the baby.

"Raybould got four of the nine goals without showing any particular emotion, but then he is not an 'old 'un' like Edgar. When he is, he will be just as pleased as Chadwick was to show that he is not yet a 'good old has-been'."







ANFIELD AVALANCHE OF GOALS.

HODGSON A THRUSTFUL ATTACKER.



TABLES TURNED WITH EIGHT GOALS

LIVERPOOL inflicted a heavy defeat on Burnley yesterday at Anfield, replying to Burnley's victory of 3-2 on Christmas Day with a score of 8-0. In the upper picture Burnley goalkeeper is holding a strong shot, and in the lower Forrest is saving a certain goal while Somerville is running back.

Liverpool 7 Tottenham Hotspur 0

First Division 2 September 1978

"Have you ever heard 50,000 people purr with pleasure?" mused *Liverpool Echo* correspondent Michael Charters. "Well, the Anfield spectators were doing that constantly as Liverpool stroked the ball around with one-touch moves of staggering accuracy.

"This display confirmed for me, particularly after the splendour of their wins at Ipswich Town and Manchester City the previous week, that the current Liverpool team is playing better, more exciting, attacking football than any side I've seen since the war."

Much-fancied Tottenham arrived at Anfield with Argentina's World Cup winners Ossie Ardiles and Ricky Villa in their ranks. But the back-to-back European champions turned in a breathtaking display of football despite losing skipper Emlyn Hughes to a 25th-minute injury.

Kenny Dalglish got the first when he swivelled onto a Jimmy Case pass and fired the ball underneath Spurs keeper Barry Daines, and made it 2-0 when he diverted Case's misdirected shot into the net. It was 3-0 before half-time when Ray Kennedy's header, from a Terry McDermott cross, deflected in off a Spurs defender.

After a brilliant one-handed save by Ray Clemence, the second half was just three minutes old when substitute David Johnson struck. Creator supreme Dalglish slipped Johnson in for the fifth, and the sixth was a Phil Neal penalty after Steve Heighway was fouled. Then came perhaps Anfield's greatest-ever goal.

Clemence ended a Spurs attack and gave the ball to Ray Kennedy, who in turn found Dalglish. He moved it on quickly to Johnson who sprayed the ball diagonally to Heighway. The surging left winger didn't even take a touch before crossing to the far-post where McDermott, arriving at speed, headed home.

"That must be the best goal Anfield has ever seen," said manager Bob Paisley. Over 40 years later, it's still hard to disagree.


SEVEN-GOAL ROMP BY SUPER REDS

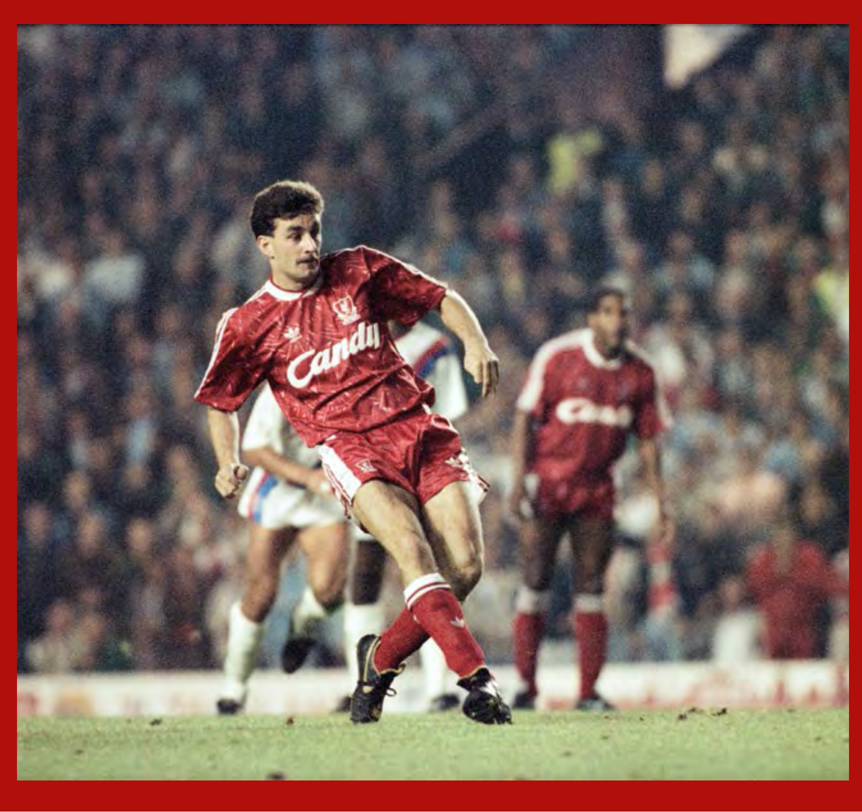
Liverpool 7, Spurs 0

LINE-UP











Liverpool 9 Crystal Palace 0

First Division 12 September 1989

"Not a team in the land would have lived with us that night," recalled John Aldridge, who signed off his LFC career with a goal in what remains the Reds' record top-flight win.

Newly-promoted Palace hadn't played at Anfield for nine years and Steve Coppell's men conceded a goal for each of them as Kenny Dalglish's side ran riot.

Steve Nicol curled in the first from Ronnie Whelan's pass and after Geoff Thomas struck Bruce Grobbelaar's post it was from Nicol's defence-splitting pass on the counter-attack that Steve McMahon audaciously chipped Eagles keeper Perry Suckling.

Peter Beardsley looked like getting the third on the stroke of half-time when he shimmied his way into the penalty area, only for a tackle to present the ball to Ian Rush. He didn't miss.

After the break, Gary Gillespie made it 4-0 with a diving header after John Barnes flicked on Beardsley's corner, and it was all too easy for Beardsley to add a fifth when a simple one-two with Rush opened up the Eagles defence.

When Whelan was fouled in the box, Aldridge – who would sign for Real Sociedad 48 hours later – was sent on to take the penalty. With his first touch he sent Suckling the wrong way to net his 63rd and final Liverpool goal in just his 104th game.

Palace had a chance to get one back after Glenn Hysen



upended Alan Pardew in the box, but Thomas fired his spot-kick high into the Anfield Road end instead of the net.

Barnes then curled a glorious free-kick home to make it 7-0, Hysen headed his first LFC goal from a Barnes corner to make it eight, and in the 90th minute Nicol converted David Burrows' low cross to have the 'vidiprinter' reading 'Liverpool 9 [NINE] Crystal Palace 0'.

Crystal Palace 0 Liverpool 7

Premier League 19 December 2020

Liverpool's record away top-flight victory was also Palace's worst-ever home defeat and Jürgen Klopp's new club-record 127th Premier League win. Not bad for a team missing Virgil van Dijk, Joe Gomez, Thiago and Diogo Jota.

Takumi Minamino, a year and a day since it was announced he was joining the Reds, got the scoring underway when he took Sadio Mane's quick pass, sidestepped ex-Red Nathaniel Clyne, and rifled the ball home. It was also Taki's first Premier League goal.

Jordan Ayew wasted an opportunity to tee up Wilfried Zaha to equalise before Sadio Mane blasted home the second on the edge of the box. He celebrated his tenth goal against the Eagles by recreating a celebration by Reds fan Lee Swan as featured in a Nivea Men Dear Liverpool FC video.

Liverpool's third was a counter-attack of which the Class of '78 would've been proud. Roberto Firmino half-volleyed the ball out to Andy Robertson, sprinted ahead then sublimely controlled the left-back's cross before flicking it past Vicente Guaita with the outside of his boot. World-class.

The Redmen were relentless in the second half and after Jordan Henderson clipped home a fourth goal from the edge of the area, Mo Salah came on to cause havoc.

He picked out Firmino in the 68th minute with Bobby's left-footed finish earning an 'Oooh' from substitute Curtis Jones, shown by the cameras with Klopp on the touchline as he waited to come on.

Salah then fired himself top of the Premier League goalscoring charts with a double. His first was a close-range reaction header from Joel Matip's knockdown, his second a curled finish from outside the box after receiving a pass from Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, on his own return to action.

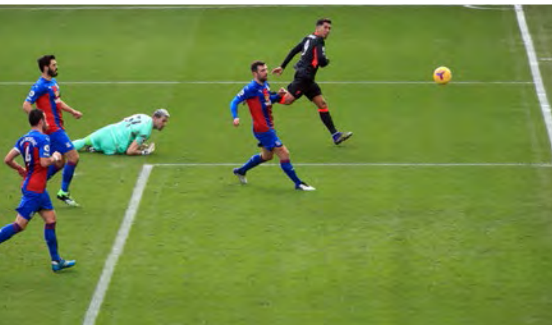
It was a magnificent seventh from a magnificent team.













LFC BY MOTD: WHAT THE PUNDITS SAID

GARY LINEKER: "A blistering performance from Liverpool, record-breaking stuff. They really are getting their act together this season now, aren't they? Liverpool's record victory away in the top-flight. What a display, Alan."

ALAN SHEARER: "It was a devastating display of finishing, Gary. Not only that but the appreciation and understanding of what's in and around the players, and the space for other players to run into – it was so intelligent.

[Shearer talking over footage of first goal] "You've got the three of them starting there: Firmino, Mane and Minamino. Just watch the movement from Mane. He goes short but doesn't come… That creates the space for him to run into… What's around him, the awareness… The touch and finish from Minamino is fantastic.

[Second goal footage] "Three of them again, here, all close up together. Defenders can't get tight to them – don't know whether to get tight to them. Again, watch the pass here from Firmino, into Mane. Again the touch and the finish.

[Third goal footage]. "But this is the best goal of the afternoon for me. The three of them – look where they start, and look where they finish. The [Firmino] touch with the outside of the foot, then the pass with the outside of the right foot. Now look at them trying to get on the end of it. Now look at Firmino telling Mane, 'You run to your right-hand side', which then will create the space for him to run into. But there's still so much to do. The touch and the finish, sublime.

[Fifth goal footage] "This time it's Trent Alexander-Arnold from the right-hand side, the ball in behind. Salah's now on the pitch. Again, Minamino – look. Because he's prepared to run into the space, the defender has to come with him, which then creates the space in behind him for Firmino. But there's still so much to do. The finish and the touch is fantastic.

[Seventh goal footage] "And we can't leave this guy out also. I mean, just sit back and admire that. Wow. It really was a devastating display from all of the forwards on the pitch. Magnificent, great to watch."


















TONY

OUR **KID**

Local lad Gerry Marsden gave Liverpool FC its heart-and-soul anthem and ensured its teams through the ages would never walk alone

In these extraordinary times the club and its fans have now borne the loss of three Liverpool FC legends in recent weeks. Goalkeeping great Ray Clemence in mid-November followed by former manager Gerard Houllier almost exactly month later – the many, many tributes to him are featured later in this issue.

Then, with the new year hardly upon us, came the news that Gerry Marsden had passed away, aged 78, after a short illness. His voice, and particularly that special, special song, is not just part of the fabric of Anfield – it is Anfield. Matchdays would not be the same without it.

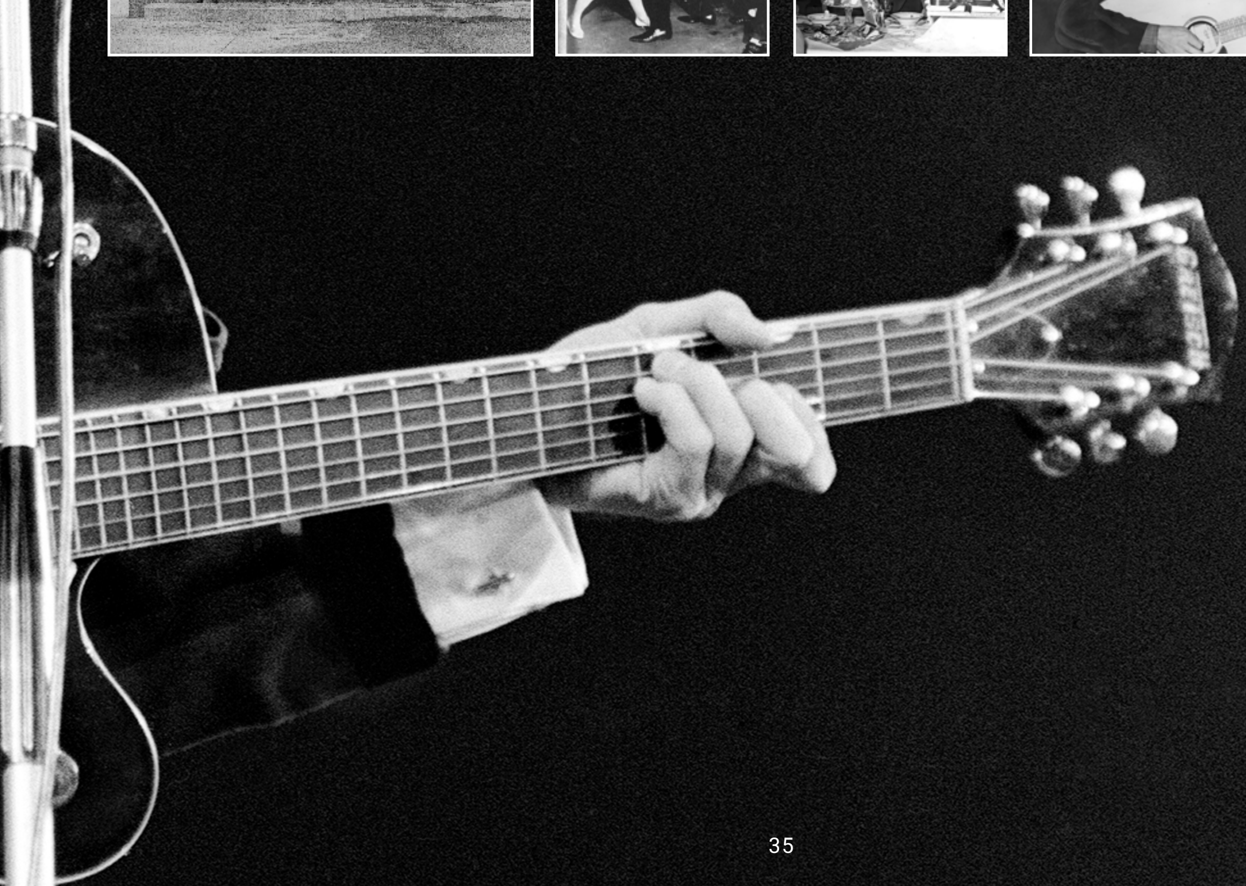
Originally a number-one hit single for Gerry and his band The Pacemakers 57 years ago, *You'll Never Walk Alone* re-entered the charts in March 2020 at the start of lockdown, coinciding with the weekly 'clap for carers'. The following month a version recorded by Captain Tom Moore, singer Michael Ball and an NHS choir topped the charts.

Gerry was also one of the vocalists of a charity version back in 1985, released to raise funds for victims of the Bradford City fire. In doing so he became the first person to sing on two different chart-topping versions of the same song.

Four years later, in the aftermath of the Hillsborough tragedy,








Kawneer
NO EXIT
IAN SKELLY









Gerry also recorded a new version of his 1964 hit *Ferry Cross the Mersey*, with Paul McCartney and other local artists in aid of those we lost and their families.

Marsden, born and raised in Liverpool 8, never forgot his roots and regularly appeared at Anfield down the years, sometimes on the pitch leading the crowd in singing *YNWA* for testimonials and concerts. He was made an MBE in 2003 for his music and his services to charity, and he was awarded the Freedom of Liverpool in 2009.

The song itself was adopted by the Spion Kop as its anthem in the early 'Swinging Sixties' when the fans on the huge terrace were also belting out hits by The Beatles and Cilla Black. The team's kit had changed to all-red, and heroes like manager Bill Shankly and players Ron Yeats, Roger Hunt and Ian St John were idolised.

In his book *Liverpool: Wondrous Place*, author Paul Du Noyer noted: "By an extraordinary coincidence, the team's resurgence occurred precisely at the time of Merseybeat's supremacy. And it was the Kop, that swaying mass of humanity at one end of the











Anfield ground, which synthesised the two phenomena.

"What would amaze outsiders was the Kop's instinctive unanimity. It seemed to think as one: a gigantic, single organism that symbolised the wit, musicality and solidarity of the whole city. *You'll Never Walk Alone* was both instantaneous and permanent."

YNWA was originally a show tune from the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *Carousel*, and Gerry would recall: "In the early 1960s we were performing it around the clubs in Liverpool because we loved the song so much. The audience would just stop, stand there and listen. Then we recorded and released it."

BBC Radio Merseyside presenter Spencer Leigh has since recalled that American singer Johnny Mathis had brought out his own version of *You'll Never Walk Alone* just before Marsden, but "I don't think the Kop would have taken to it because you couldn't sing along with Johnny Mathis – he had too big a range and too perfect a voice.

"Gerry sounded like 'everyman' and it was absolutely perfect

for the Kop. I think it's the greatest football anthem of the lot."

On 2 November 1963 the song went to the top of the 'Hit Parade' and stayed there for four weeks. Among those who'd bought the single was Stewart Bateman, who'd been employed by Liverpool FC to play records at Anfield. His wife Hilda worked in the Anfield boardroom and was the daughter of the head groundsman.

When Stewart first played *YNWA* inside the ground he "could not believe the reaction from the crowd" who sang along. When the single eventually dropped from the charts, he kept playing it at Anfield before kick-off by popular demand – and it seemed to inspire Shankly's Reds to the 1963/64 title. The rest is history.

"I'll always remember you with a smile," Paul McCartney posted on Twitter when the news about Gerry broke on Sunday 3 January 2021.

That goes for every Liverpudlian at this sad time, and just imagine what that first rendition back inside a packed Anfield will be like. Much love, Gerry.




YOU'LL NEVER WALK
32

JOEL'S WORLD

Joel Matip recently teamed up with Sky Sports to answer a range of questions sent to him via their social media channels, and here's what he said…

WHICH TEAM DID YOU SUPPORT GROWING UP?
That's a tough question. I was a fan of my former club Schalke because I grew up there from when I was nine, but if you look maybe a little bit more internationally I would say it was maybe Real Madrid. It was just the players that they had, the Galacticos like Zinedine Zidane, Luis Figo, Ronaldo and Raul.

HOW DOES IT FEEL TO GO FROM PLAYING AGAINST JÜRGEN KLOPP TO PLAYING WITH HIM?
I prefer to play with him – most of my games against him for Schalke ended not so well for my side! So I really enjoy to play for him and under him because this is a huge club and I love playing for him.

Dortmund v Schalke is a big derby in Germany and it is a really, really big thing. Of course Dortmund is ahead at the moment and it's hard to compete but yes, this is always one of the biggest games in the Bundesliga. The fans really dislike each other, to be honest, and you already feel that as a youth.

It's always a special game and if you know this kind of feeling and what it means for all the people at the club and for yourself, it is always a really big game and you are looking forward to it. Three points against Dortmund means a lot more than three points against each other team.



WITH THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE WE COULD CELEBRATE IT WITH OUR SUPPORTERS IN THE MOMENT, SO I WOULD SAY FOR ME THAT WAS THE BEST PARTY – AND IT WAS A LONG NIGHT!

WHO IS MORE COMPETITIVE: TRENT ALEXANDER-ARNOLD OR ANDY ROBERTSON?

That's hard to say. I think they always try to be better than the other, to make more assists and so on, but only in a way that helps the team.

For sure I would say Robbo would be the loudest but as for most competitive, I would say that is quite even. They always push each other, even on the training ground because they want to be better.

That's the competition you need in a team like ours to get better and I think the fact that they are always comparing stats and so on with each other and they are always pushing each other does makes them better.

It's great to have them because they are at the front, they're at the back, they are everywhere a lot of times, so it's just amazing to play with them.

WHICH WAS THE BETTER PARTY: WINNING THE PREMIER LEAGUE OR WINNING THE CHAMPIONS LEAGUE?

These were two great moments but for me personally I'd say the Champions League because we could celebrate it with our fans and supporters in the moment and then when we drove through the city afterwards it was just amazing.

They were both special but at the moment I would say because of those moments with the supporters, the Champions League was for me, personally, maybe a little bit higher. It was a long night and then we had the flight home and then with going on holiday afterwards, they were some crazy hours. It was more like a marathon!

WE SAW SOME FOOTAGE OF YOU DANCING TO CELEBRATE THOSE SUCCESSES – ARE YOU THE BEST DANCER IN THE LIVERPOOL SQUAD?

For sure not – I need to make that absolutely clear! I would like to be but I think you could see that I am not an expert at this. I think Ox, Joe and Gini are the best dancers. They have some great moves and it doesn't look too bad if they are on the dance floor. The manager has some impressive moves too!

I do not have a signature move and I think it is better like this – nobody really knows what I'm going to do! Dancing is just about having fun, at least how I do it. That's the most important part I think.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE FOOD?

Something classic like a margherita pizza. The German people always love sausage, so I like some types of sausage dishes too. Those are the two I really like. I don't have pizza too often but a good pizza is always quite nice.



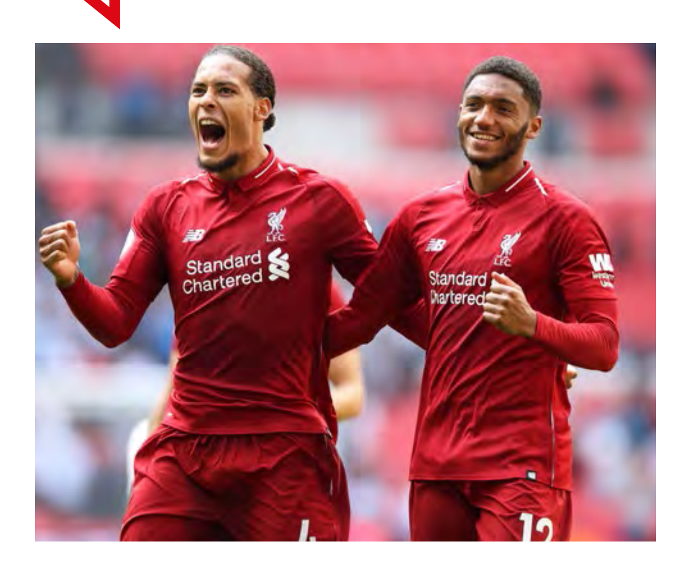


IS THERE ANY FOOD YOU SEE THE ENGLISH GUYS EATING AND THINK: I DON'T FANCY THAT!?
I'm not too sure I would say it like that, but I'm not too sure about pies! It's kind of weird for me because when I think about a pie, I always think about something sweet.

We don't actually have that much English food here with the team as the cooking tends to be quite international with players in the squad from all over the world.



VIRGIL AND JOE CAN BE REALLY, REALLY QUICK BUT I CAN DEAL WITH MOST THINGS WITH MY PACE AND I'VE BEEN DOING QUITE WELL SO FAR



HAVE YOU SEEN THE NO CONTEXT JOEL MATIP ACCOUNT ON TWITTER WHICH NOW HAS 50,000 FOLLOWERS?
I've not seen it but I think I know what you're talking about because from time to time my team-mates mention it in the group chat! Sometimes friends have shown me a picture or a video from it, too, so I've not seen it directly, but indirectly I have seen some of the content on there.

WHO IS YOUR BEST FRIEND AT LIVERPOOL?
It's hard to mention one of them. I get along with all of them because the team is quite easygoing. From the first moment everybody was so kind and you can make jokes with everyone. I'm not sure how we created that environment, but as I say from the first moment I arrived here everyone was nice and welcoming.

On the training pitch it's really competitive and everybody tries to give everything. Everyone is aggressive in those training sessions but after they are over, everybody is very good with each other in the dressing-room and I think you can see that often on the pitch.

IS IT TRUE THAT YOU ARE THE FASTEST DEFENDER AT THE CLUB?
No – that's a clear answer! I think Virgil is. It depends whether you're talking about the first few metres or over a bigger distance as I think Joe is also really, really quick.

For sure I think I am not the quickest but I can deal with most things with my pace and I am doing quite well with my pace so far. I have long legs which means I can help myself and I don't need to be the quickest on the field.


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BARCELONA HAS TO BE MY FAVOURITE MATCH SO FAR, IT WAS JUST A GREAT MOMENT AND WITH THE HISTORY THAT WE WON THE TITLE AFTERWARDS

WHO IS THE BEST-DRESSED AT LIVERPOOL...AND THE WORST?
I would say Bobby for both questions! But he can dress like he does and it looks quite good. If I dressed like that I would look ridiculous but it's perfect for him. It's like he's coming directly from Milan or Paris! For him it's perfect and he really takes care about things like that.

But for me personally it would be too much. I'm not a fashion addict. I look at what I'm wearing, but let's say I don't spend a lot of hours in front of my wardrobe.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE LIVERPOOL MATCH SO FAR?
I have to say it was the Barcelona one. It was just a great moment and with the history that we won the title after it, it makes that game complete. Nobody expected us to go to the final after the first game but we made it through and after the game standing there in front of the Kop was just an amazing feeling.

The sad thing for me was that I was one of the players chosen for the doping tests afterwards so I couldn't go straight to the dressing-room afterwards and by the time I got back, everyone was gone. But it was still a great night!

WHO HAS THE WORST TASTE IN MUSIC AT LIVERPOOL?
That is a tough question. It's not the worst but Sadio's choices are what we hear most often. He's always the first in the gym and so he picks the music there. I'm getting a little bit tired of his music now, to be honest!

WHAT WAS YOUR REACTION WHEN YOU FIRST DISCOVERED THAT YOU WOULD BE SIGNING FOR LIVERPOOL FOOTBALL CLUB?
It was a big honour that I could be a part of this big club. It was a really big opportunity for me to play for a club like this with its great history and to try and be a part of the history to come.



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QU

We'd all like 2021 to be a much kinder year all round, but 2020 did have its fulfilling moments for the Reds. Were you paying attention, though? Then take on our 50 questions…

JANUARY

1 Who scored Liverpool's first goal of 2020?

2 Which beaten manager in that first game said, "We never laid a glove on them…we have been well-beaten"?

3 Again for that same game, which Liverpool player was named in the starting line-up but dropped out after injuring a groin in the warm-up?

4 What did Liverpool wear on the front of their shirts for the FA Cup tie against Everton at Anfield?



5 Mo Salah sealed a 2-0 win against Manchester United with a late goal in front of the Kop – from whose assist?

FEBRUARY

6 The Reds started February with a 4-0 victory over Southampton at Anfield – who provided a hat-trick of assists?

7 Neil Critchley took charge of the Reds for their FA Cup fourth-round replay win over Shrewsbury Town, when which visiting defender put through his own goal?

8 Who came off the bench to score the only goal of the game at Norwich City?



9 The Reds came from behind to defeat West Ham 3-2 at Anfield with which two players providing the assists?

10 Liverpool suffered their first Premier League defeat of 2019/20 at Watford, but how many games had they previously gone undefeated in their league season?

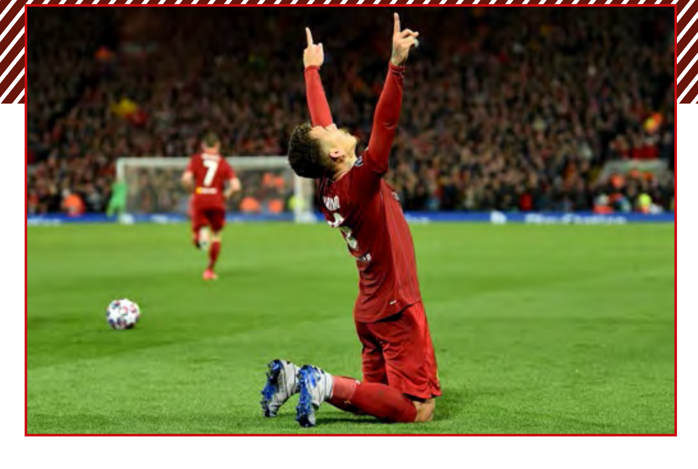
MARCH

11 Liverpool went out of the FA Cup in their first game of March – at whose hands?

12 Whose dramatic goal-line clearance denied Bournemouth's Ryan Fraser from scoring an equaliser at Anfield?

13 And who scored and provided an assist in the 2-1 win over the Cherries?

14 Liverpool's last game before lockdown was against Atletico Madrid in the Champions League. Who put the Reds ahead just before half-time?



15 And what was significant about Roberto Firmino's goal which gave the Reds a 2-1 advantage early in extra-time?

APRIL

16 Can you name Liverpool FC's head of nutrition who organised food packages for the players during lockdown?

17 Who posted social-media videos of himself cutting the grass in his garden with a pair of scissors, and reading a Scrabble Dictionary?

18 And who went viral after performing a dance routine with his girlfriend?

MAY

19 On what day did the Reds return to non-contact training at Melwood: (a) 10 May (b) 20 May, or (c) 30 May?

20 As training resumed, which LFC player said: "It is still not over – we still have work to do and still need to perform at a high level right the way until the season finishes"?

JUNE

21 When the Reds returned to action at Everton, it was their first game for how many days: (a) 85 (b) 95, or (c) 105?

22 Which front-three started for Liverpool in that Merseyside derby?

23 Can you name the four scorers in the 4-0 win over Crystal Palace that put the Reds on the brink of the Premier League title?

24 Manchester City's defeat at which ground confirmed the Reds as champions of England for the first time in 30 years?

25 And whose winning penalty confirmed Liverpool's title?

JULY

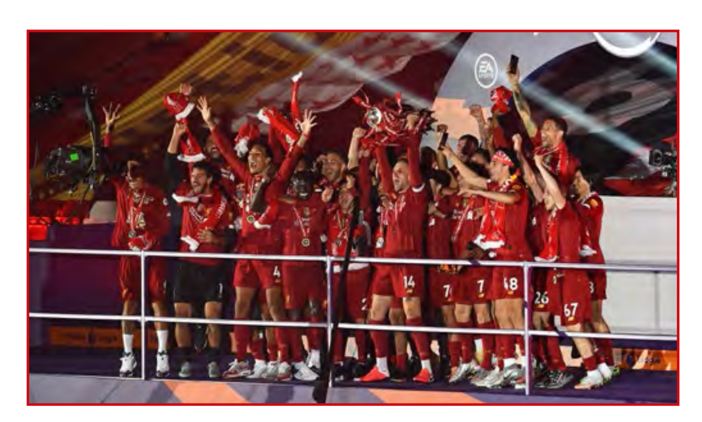
26 Liverpool's first official game as champions was against which side?

27 Curtis Jones scored his first Premier League goal against whom?

28 Which team ended the Reds' hopes of winning all 19 of their Premier League fixtures at Anfield?

29 Who scored the opening goal in the 5-3 defeat of Chelsea in Liverpool's final home game of 2019/20?

30 Who presented Jordan Henderson with the Premier League trophy on the Kop?



AUGUST

31 Kostas Tsimikas became Liverpool's first summer signing – from which club?

32 The Reds' first pre-season friendly was a 3-0 win over VfB Stuttgart – can you name the three goalscorers?

33 Liverpool came from behind to draw 2-2 with RB Salzburg in another friendly, but which striker scored both goals for the Austrian side?

34 Which Liverpool midfielder completed a permanent transfer to Reading?

35 Who scored for the Reds in normal time of the FA Community Shield against Arsenal?

SEPTEMBER

36 The Reds signed off their pre-season campaign with a 7-2 victory at Anfield against which club?

37 Mo Salah scored an opening day hat-trick against whom?

38 Which two players scored twice in the 7-2 Carabao Cup win at Lincoln City?

39 Who scored his first goal for the Reds in that game at Sincil Bank?

40 Diogo Jota scored in his first LFC game at Anfield against Arsenal, with Sadio Mane and which other player also on target for the Reds?

OCTOBER

41 Who had a last-minute 'winner' against Everton at Goodison Park ruled out by VAR?



42 Liverpool's 1-0 win at Ajax was their first competitive game against the Dutch side since which year?

43 Liverpool had a no64 on the bench for the Champions League games against Ajax and FC Midtjylland – who was he?

44 Who made his Premier League debut in the 2-1 win over West Ham United?

NOVEMBER

45 Who scored his first Champions League hat-trick in the 5-0 win away to Atalanta?

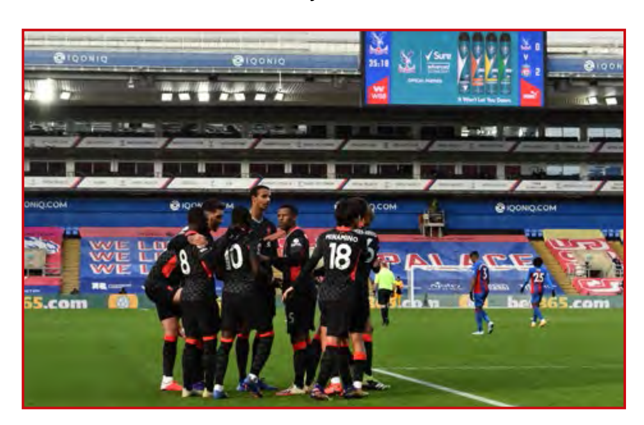
46 Who missed a penalty for the home side during the Reds' 1-1 draw at Manchester City?

47 Goalkeeping great Ray Clemence passed away this month – how many clean-sheets did he keep for Liverpool: (a) 223 (b) 273, or (c) 323?

48 Which Leicester player put through his own goal as Liverpool beat the Foxes 3-0 at Anfield?

DECEMBER

49 The 7-0 win at Crystal Palace was a club-record top-flight away victory and also the first time there have been assists from seven different players for one team – but can you name them all?

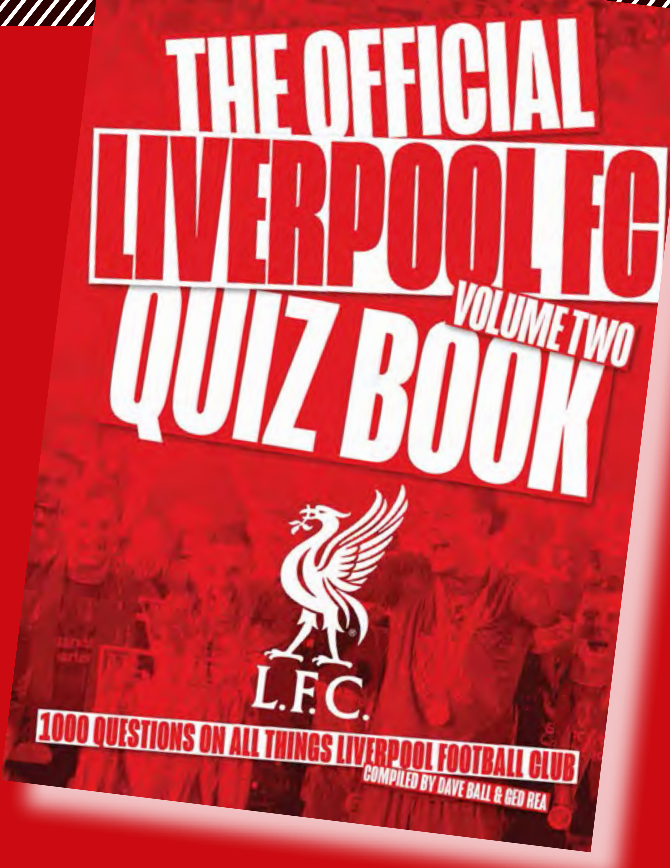


50 Liverpool completed a third successive calendar year unbeaten at Anfield in league football with only two visiting teams taking Premier League points off the Reds in 2020 – who were they?

ANSWERS: *1. Mohamed Salah; 2. Chris Wilder of Sheffield United; 3. Naby Keita; 4. The FIFA World Club Champions badge; 5 Alisson Becker; 6. Roberto Firmino; 7. Ro-Shaun Williams; 8. Sadio Mane; 9. Trent Alexander-Arnold (two) and Andy Robertson; 10. They'd gone 27 games unbeaten; 11. Chelsea; 12. James Milner; 13. Sadio Mane; 14. Gini Wijnaldum; 15. It was his first goal of the season at Anfield; 16. Mona Nemmer; 17. James Milner; 18. Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain; 19. (b) 20 May; 20. Jordan Henderson; 21. (c) 105 days; 22. Roberto Firmino, Sadio Mane and Takumi Minamino; 23. Trent Alexander-Arnold, Mohamed Salah, Fabinho and Sadio Mane; 24. Stamford Bridge; 25. Chelsea's Willian; 26. Manchester City; 27. Aston Villa; 28. Burnley; 29. Naby Keita; 30. Sir Kenny Dalglish; 31. Olympiacos; 32. Roberto Firmino, Naby Keita and Rhian Brewster; 33. Patson Daka; 34. Ovie Ejaria; 35. Takumi Minamino; 36. Blackpool; 37. Leeds United; 38. Curtis Jones and Takumi Minamino; 39. Marko Grujic; 40. Andy Robertson; 41. Jordan Henderson; 42. Since 1966; 43. Jake Cain; 44. Nat Phillips; 45. Diogo Jota; 46. Kevin De Bruyne; 47. (c) 323; 48. Jonny Evans; 49. Sadio Mane, Roberto Firmino, Andy Robertson, Trent Alexander-Arnold, Mo Salah, Joel Matip and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain; 50. Burnley and West Bromwich Albion.*

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To celebrate the new year, we are giving away FIVE copies of the second volume of the Official Liverpool FC Quiz Book.

Once again there are 1,000 questions and 100 quizzes relating to the history of the club, with the 2019/20 season covered in depth – when a 19th top-flight title, UEFA Super Cup and FIFA Club World Cup were added in an unprecedented treble-winning season.

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Dave has been a consultant on BBC TV's *A Question of Sport*, while his interrogator-in-chief Ged has worked with him on the club's matchday programme, this magazine, LFC TV and the club website. Ged has for many years provided the national press, radio and television with statistics ahead of every game.

The Official Liverpool FC Quiz Book is available from club stores now.

To be in with a chance of winning, simply answer the following question:

Who scored Liverpool FC's first hat-trick of 2020?

Email your answer, name, address and contact number with 'LFC Quiz Book' in the subject-line to liverpoolfcmag@reachsport.com before 1 February 2021. Normal Reach PLC competition rules apply.

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Test your Reds knowledge with this brilliant pack of 50 trivia cards with 200 questions on all things LFC, including 'multiple-choice', 'true-or-false' and 'name the season' questions that will challenge even lifelong Liverpool fans.

The Official Liverpool FC Trivia Quiz is available from club stores now.

For a chance to win, answer the following question:

When Liverpool beat Leicester City 3-0 at Anfield in November, it took their undefeated home league run to a club-record how many games?

Email your answer, name, address and contact number with 'LFC Trivia Quiz' in the subject-line to liverpoolfcmag@reachsport.com before 1 February 2021.
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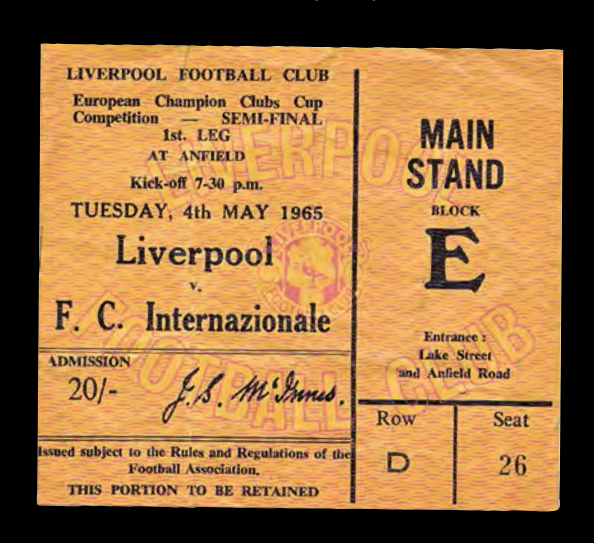


EUROPEAN ROYALTY

From the mid-Sixties to the here and now – tracing some of the key events from the European timeline of Liverpool FC as the Champions League prepares to resume

1964/65

Roger Hunt scores in every round as Bill Shankly's Liverpool reach the European Cup semi-finals. In the previous round they beat Cologne, progressing on a coin-toss after three draws, but in the last four they lose 4-3 to reigning champions Inter Milan over two pulsating legs.





1965/66

Having finally ended their long wait for a first FA Cup win, Liverpool enter the European Cup Winners' Cup and go all the way to the final. They eliminate Juventus, Standard Liege, Honved and Jock Stein's Celtic in an epic 'Battle of Britain' but lose to Borussia Dortmund after extra-time at Glasgow's Hampden Park. Consolation comes in the form of a seventh English league title.

1967/68

The Reds cruise past Malmo then TSV Munich (9-2 on aggregate) in the European Fairs Cup before losing to Hungarian side Ferencvaros in the third round.

1968/69

Liverpool's Fairs Cup campaign ends in the first round after they trade 2-1 wins with Athletic Bilbao but go out to a coin-toss.

1970/71

Liverpool lose a titanic all-English semi-final to Leeds United in the Fairs Cup. One goal settles it, Billy Bremner scoring at Anfield in the first leg. Don Revie's team beat Juventus on away-goals in the final.

1972/73

Liverpool lift the UEFA Cup, beating Borussia Moenchengladbach 3-2 on aggregate in the final. In the semis they defeat Tottenham on away-goals. It was 1-0 at Anfield and 1-2 at White Hart Lane, and Shanks says: "For both teams to give that sort of display after each playing more than 60 games this season was unbelievable. It was a fantastic game and so close."



1975/76

Bob Paisley's Reds win a second UEFA Cup with a 4-3 aggregate win against Bruges. Highlights of the run include a 1-0 victory at Barcelona, whose side includes Dutch aces Johan Cruyff and Johan Neeskens. It makes Liverpool the first English team to win at the Nou Camp.

1976/77

The glory that was Rome. Liverpool gather their first European Cup in May, beating old foes Borussia Moenchengladbach four days after losing in the FA Cup final. Tens of thousands of fans converge upon the Eternal City and turn the Stadio Olimpico into a sea of red-and-white as first Terry McDermott steers home the black-and-white panelled ball, then Allan Simonsen equalises, before Tommy Smith heads his team ahead again and Phil Neal converts from the spot. Telegram-from-the-Queen time.







1977/78

Kevin Keegan returns to Anfield with Hamburg who are duly thumped 6-0 in the second leg of the UEFA Super Cup final as Liverpool land more silverware. By the end of the season they have successfully defended the European Cup, too, Kenny Dalglish netting a wonderful winner in the Wembley final v Bruges.

"Winning the European Cup has always been my ambition," says Kenny. "This is the greatest night of my life in club football."

1978/79

Miracles do happen for Brian Clough's Nottingham Forest, who eliminate holders Liverpool in the first round of the European Cup and go on to win the trophy. LFC's hopes of a second successive Super Cup are also dashed, this time by Anderlecht in the Anfield fog.



1980/81

European Cup no3 is claimed in Paris courtesy of Alan Kennedy's angled winner for Liverpool against Real Madrid. The left-back admits: "I thought I mis-kicked it after taking the throw-in on my chest. It must be everyone's ambition to score the winning goal in a European Cup final and after my goal in the League Cup final at Wembley [against West Ham 10 weeks earlier] it's been quite a season for me." The Reds had beaten Alex Ferguson's Aberdeen in round two.



1983/84

'Barney Rubble' is the hero once more as his spot-kick helps Liverpool defeat Roma in their own backyard and claim a fourth European Cup. It'd been one-all after 120 minutes, then Roma miss two in the shoot-out against Bruce Grobbelaar's 'spaghetti-legs' routine. The triumph gives Joe Fagan a treble of league, League Cup and European Cup in his first season as manager.

1984/85

A dark day for football as Liverpool reach the European Cup final for the fifth time in a game overshadowed by the pre-match events at Heysel and deaths of 39 Juventus supporters.

It prompts UEFA to ban English clubs from European football for five years with Liverpool receiving an additional three-year exclusion, later reduced to one-year. Earlier in the season the Reds had lost 2-0 to Juve in a one-off European Super Cup game at the Stadio Communale.

1991/92

Liverpool's first European campaign since 1984/85 sees them progress to the fourth round of the UEFA Cup. Auxerre are memorably overcome in a stirring Anfield comeback before Genoa knock out the Reds in the fourth round.

1996/97

The Reds under Roy Evans progress to the last four of the Cup Winners' Cup where at Anfield they almost overturn a 3-0 first-leg loss at Paris St Germain.

2000/01

Liverpool's first European silverware since 1984 arrives in spectacular fashion, an own-goal completing a 5-4 thriller against Alaves in the UEFA Cup final at Dortmund's Westfalen Stadium. Gerard Houllier's Redmen lead 2-0, 3-1 and 4-3 in normal-time but the Basques, with ex-United player Jordi Cruyff in their ranks, fight back each time. It's the third and final part of an LFC cup treble.





2001/02

Goals from John Arne Riise, Emile Heskey and Michael Owen put Liverpool three up inside 46 minutes of the Super Cup final against Bayern Munich, who get two back late on. In the Champions League the Reds bow out 4-2 to a superb Bayer Leverkusen side which only loses the Glasgow final to a Zinedine Zidane wonder-volley.

2004/05

Olympiacos…Leverkusen…Juventus…Chelsea… So many memorable nights on Liverpool's road to Istanbul. After a 21-year hiatus the Reds, under Rafael Benitez, return to their European perch in a Champions League final of unsurpassable drama in Istanbul's Ataturk Stadium. Milan had beaten United in the quarter-finals.

"To do what we've done in the second half – that will go down as one of the greatest European finals," says Jamie Carragher. "I don't think it will ever be bettered."

2005/06

Liverpool are one-down to CSKA Moscow in the Super Cup final in Monaco when up pops substitute Djibril Cisse, equalising to force extra-time, making it 2-1 and also providing an assist for Luis Garcia. The Reds bow out to Benfica in the Champions League first knockout round.



2006/07

The Reds reach their seventh EC/UCL final, along the way winning again in Barcelona and prevailing once more against Chelsea. But in Athens they go down 2-1 to a redemption-seeking AC Milan.



2007/08

With English clubs enjoying a season of Champions League domination the Reds are eliminated by Chelsea in a third semi-final showdown. Highlight for Rafa's Reds is a quarter-final victory over Arsenal, the pick of the six second-leg Anfield goals coming from Fernando Torres.

2008/09

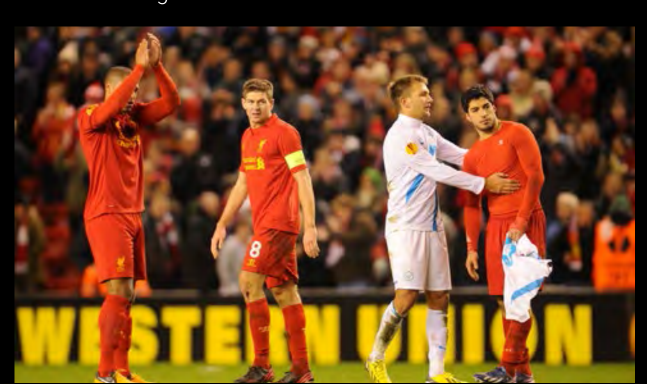
Having beaten Real Madrid 5-0 on aggregate, Liverpool lose to old foes Chelsea in the last eight after an epic 4-4 draw at Stamford Bridge. Talk about going out with heads held high.

2009/10

Liverpool reach the last four of the Europa League to face an Atletico Madrid team featuring in-form ex-Manchester United striker Diego Forlan. The Reds lose 1-0 at the Vicente Calderon and win 2-1 at Anfield: out on away-goals to the team which beats Fulham in the final.

2012/13

With new manager Brendan Rodgers at the helm, the Reds reach the last 32 of the Europa League but go out agonisingly to Zenit Saint Petersburg, a 3-1 victory at Anfield in the second leg not enough to get them through.



2014/15

Back in the big time but it's a disappointing return to Champions League action, as Liverpool-minus-Suarez fail to progress from a group featuring Cristiano Ronaldo's Real Madrid. They transfer into the Europa League but are duly eliminated by Besiktas.

2015/16

Three games into the Europa League group stages, Liverpool have a new manager, and Jürgen Klopp guides the Reds to the final, beating Manchester United and Borussia Dortmund memorably along the way, as the club seeks a fourth triumph in the tournament. But Sevilla prove too streetwise in the Basel final.



2010/11

A long Europa League campaign under first Roy Hodgson then Kenny Dalglish ends in round-of-16 defeat to SC Braga who go on to contest an all-Portuguese final with Porto in Dublin.





2017/18

After a fallow European year the Reds take the Champions League by storm, blitzing first their group opponents, then Porto, Manchester City and Roma to reach the final in Kiev. Again, though, luck ultimately deserts them, with ace marksman Mo Salah injured and substituted early on and Real Madrid capitalising on goalkeeping errors.

2018/19

A second successive Champions League final for Klopp's irresistible Reds, and this time they make no mistake. A last-gasp Alisson save against Napoli secures progression from the groups, then Bayern Munich and Porto (again) are swept aside before a now legendary semi-final against Barcelona brings the Anfield house down. That sixth European Cup is won courtesy of Salah's spot-kick and Origi's splendid strike against Tottenham in Madrid.

"This is for the boys, the fans and for the owners who do not put any pressure on us and appreciate the development of huge steps we have made," says Klopp. "For the players, they were pretty much crying on the pitch because it was so emotional, so big, and it means so much to us. I have sat here many times explaining how we lost this [type of] game. Now I don't want to explain why we won, I just want to enjoy that we won."



2019/20

Having claimed a fourth UEFA Super Cup with victory over Chelsea in Istanbul, then a first FIFA Club World Cup by beating Flamengo in Qatar, the road to another Champions League final is blocked by Atletico Madrid in the first knockout round, just before lockdown. The Premier League title is more-than-ample compensation.



2020/21

Liverpool's fourth Champions League campaign under Jürgen Klopp resumes with a round-of-16 first leg at RB Leipzig this mid-February. The Reds topped their qualifying group, with the highlights a hard-fought win at Ajax and thumping victory at Atalanta.







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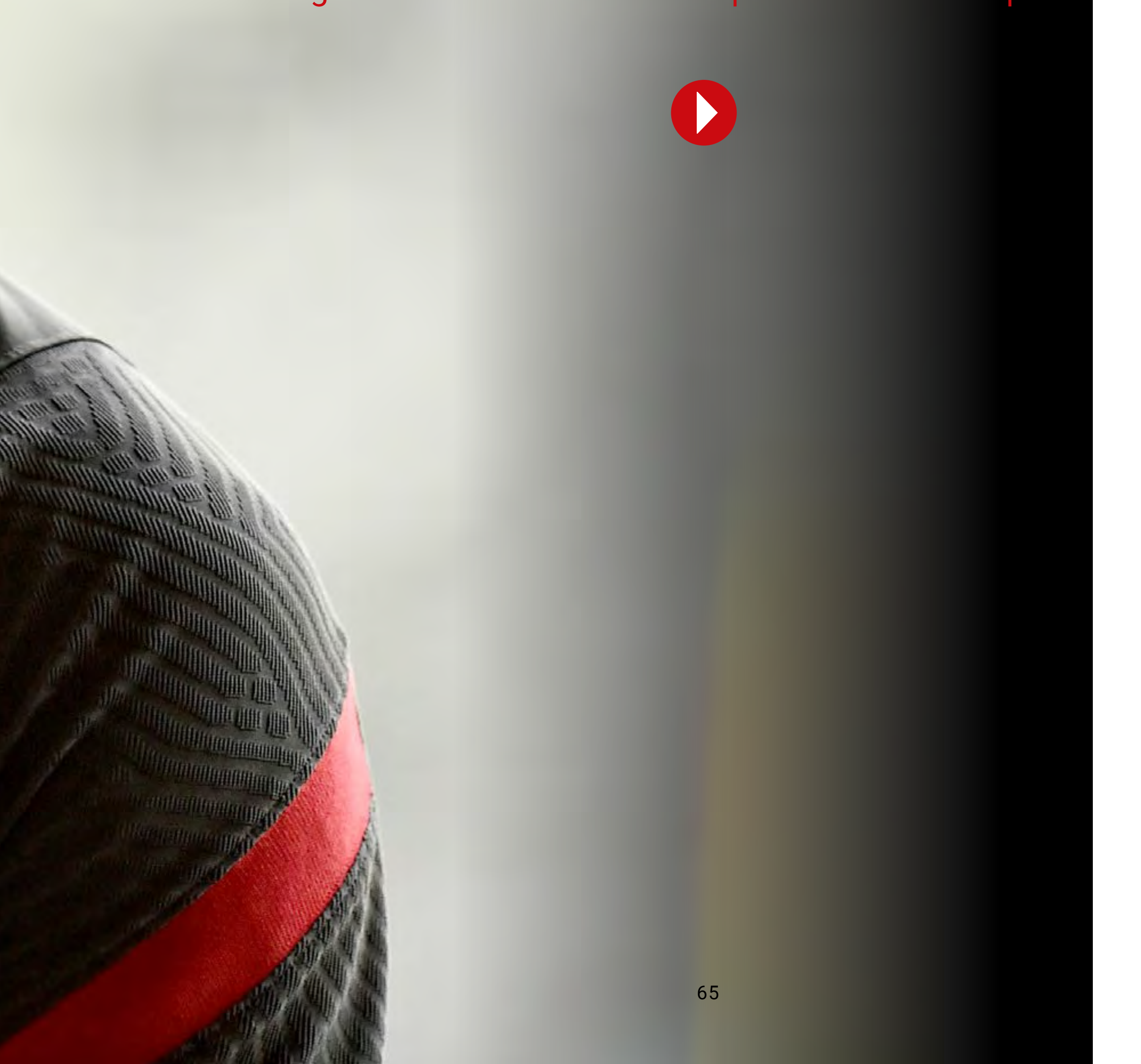




Words: William Hughes

"I'M STILL BUZZING"

Young goalkeeper Caoimhin Kelleher on his Champions League and Premier League debuts between the posts for Liverpool this season



A week or so is a long time in football, especially in the thick of a truncated season.

Caoimhin Kelleher knows that all too well following a turn of events that saw him placed under the first-team spotlight last month.

The young Irishman probably did a lot of thinking when he drove home from the Under-23s match against Manchester City on Saturday 28 November 2020. He'd just picked the ball out of his net seven times as the Reds suffered a rare off-day at the Academy, losing 7-2.

A couple of days later, he was pulled to one side by the coaching staff during a session at the AXA Training Centre. Alisson Becker had picked up a hamstring injury and the medical team had ruled him out of the forthcoming Champions League game against Ajax at Anfield.

Jürgen Klopp had decided the time was right to give the nod to Kelleher to start.

The next week proved to be something of a whirlwind for the 22-year-old. He became headline news back in Ireland as he kept clean-sheets on both his Champions League and Premier League debuts.

Now that he's had a few weeks for it all to sink in, he says: "It's probably the same feeling I had at the time. I'm still buzzing about it and I'm just really happy with the way I played. It's given me maybe a little bit more belief and confidence that I can perform and play well at those levels.

"I was told I was playing against Ajax the day before the game and I was a bit surprised at first but just buzzing, to be honest, and it was kind of a long wait as I just wanted to play. I was just really looking forward to playing the game.

"The manager said to me, 'Just play your normal game' and that he didn't expect me to be unbelievable or special. He knew it was my first game and just told me to do what I normally do and that I'd be fine.

"The advice from the goalkeeping coaches was similar really. Obviously I have John Achterberg and Jack Robinson here who have helped me a lot and I wouldn't be where I am without the coaching that I've received from them.

"They work with me every day and know the qualities that I have and I don't think they were worried about me or anything. They were just saying, 'Go and do what you normally do every day in training and you'll be fine'. That was the kind of advice from the coaches and everyone really: just do your normal thing."

A fine late reflex-save to deny Ajax's veteran striker Klaas-Jan Huntelaar capped off a impressive display. The image of Klopp making a beeline to his young goalkeeper after the final whistle



> WHATEVER THE SITUATION YOU FACE IN A GAME, YOU'LL HAVE PROBABLY DONE IT 100 TIMES IN TRAINING. SO YOU HAVE TO TRY AND REMAIN CALM IN PINPOINTING WHAT THE RIGHT DECISIONS ARE TO MAKE



before giving him one of his trademark bearhugs will stay with Liverpool supporters for some time.

A few days later Caoimhin was back at Anfield, this time in front of a limited number of supporters, to make his Premier League debut in the 4-0 win over Wolves.

Again he took to the occasion with the minimum of fuss and the maximum of competence. That will have come as no surprise to those who work with him closely and have long since marked him down as a cool character.

"I'm quite calm outside, maybe not quite as calm on the pitch! That's because you need to be alert and ready for a situation, but I still try to keep that level of calmness to be able to make the right decisions and not be too flustered or anything. I do think that having that level of calmness is a good quality to have in a goalkeeper.

"Of course there were a few nerves before the games with playing my first matches in the Champions League and the Premier League, but they weren't too bad. I think it's about managing it.

"Whatever the situation you face in a game, you'll have probably done it 100 times in training. So you have to try and remain calm in pinpointing what the right decisions are to make, and remember that you've trained all week for the situations that happen in a game so that you're ready for them. Then it's just a case of trying to be calm and do the right things."

A decade ago, the sight of Kelleher producing some important saves for Liverpool would have come as a surprise to the coaches of Ringmahon Rangers, his boys' team in Cork where he was operating as a free-scoring forward.

"I was a striker up until the age of about 13 or 14," he recalls. "I played there for about six years but then the goalkeeper of the team I played for quit or something, I can't quite remember. We were stuck for a goalie so I just stuck my hand up and it's been going nuts since!

"I used to play in goal with my brothers, but obviously it was quite different going in goal full-time. Thankfully I was able to adapt to it quite quickly.

"A chance came up for me to do a bit of goalkeeping training and I started doing that and really enjoyed it, probably more so than playing outfield. So once I got a taste for it I really wanted to have a good go because I really loved playing in goal."

His calmness extends to receiving the ball to his feet, a quality highlighted by Klopp when explaining his decision to play him ahead of Adrian in those three fixtures last month. Kelleher himself says that his background in playing youth-football as a forward has certainly helped him in that respect.

"Playing outfield has definitely helped me in terms of being comfortable on the ball as you get used to having touches and being able to use both feet and play different types of passes."

He developed his goalkeeping skills to such an extent that scouts from English clubs were soon circling. He was just 16 when he took up an offer to swap Cork for Kirkby and join Liverpool's academy.

"I had offers from a few different clubs but once I came to Liverpool I took such a liking to it that it was the only place I wanted to go. I've loved it ever since I've come over, to be honest.

"I've enjoyed starting off in the Academy for the first few years and then taking a step up to the first team. It has been a really enjoyable ride for me.

"You learn everything at the Academy. When I first came over I probably wasn't anywhere near the levels required, but the coaching you get is the best – I never really had coaching like that before.

"It really improved me and also the people there really can improve you as a person as well as being a football player, so you are really taught everything there and I owe a lot to the Academy.

"It's hard to believe it's been five years since I came over. Honestly, it's flown by. Those years have gone by in the blink-of-an-eye. I think I've grown up a lot. I was still a kid when I came over and, as I say, I've learned so much going through the Academy. Coming up to the first team, you're in with men then and you have to be able to handle yourself, so I've learned a lot."

Kelleher has also been grateful for the strength of support he has received from the other members of the LFC goalkeeping union.

"They've been really good with me. I can't say enough about them, to be honest, especially Adrian. When Alisson was injured and we found out that I was going to be starting the Ajax game, he just came up and said, 'I'm with you 100 per cent and I'll be supporting you'.

"Obviously to get that was really nice because I know it was not an easy situation for him. But that says all you need to know about him – he's a top guy. So is Alisson and he sent me messages after the games, talking about them and saying 'Well done'.

"Obviously we are very close. We train together every day and the whole goalkeeping union is a very tight-knit band. Being able to see the stuff that they do is very helpful. Alisson is one of the best goalkeepers in the world so just watching what he does in training and in matches and how he handles different situations has really helped me.

"There wasn't really any disappointment when Alisson came back in as I know the situation and, as I say, he is one of the best goalies in the world. I really enjoyed playing but my main feeling is one of gratefulness that I had the opportunity. I wasn't expecting to play in those games so I'm just happy that I did and I was able to perform."

Caoimhin admits that things might have worked out very differently had discussions about a possible loan move come to fruition in the summer. "We always look at it with the coaches and









ALISSON AND ADRIAN HAVE ALWAYS BEEN REALLY GOOD WITH ME, I CAN'T SAY ENOUGH ABOUT THEM – WE TRAIN TOGETHER EVERY DAY AND WE ARE A VERY TIGHT-KNIT GOALKEEPING UNION

thought about when might be the right time to go out on loan,

"Earlier on in the season it was looking like there might be a possibility to go and be playing somewhere else but it didn't materialise because of the situation here with the goalkeepers and so on. I was needed to stay here. It's kind of funny when you think about how you get an opportunity but then you have to try and take it and it's looking good now."

Of course he's not the only Academy graduate to have taken his chances this season and he agrees that the impact of the younger players has been pleasing to see. "Rather than feel pressure, it's been more of a case of just trying to take our opportunities. We all know how talented the young players here are and we've been trying to show that.

"All the young lads have been training with the first team for a while and I think just doing that every day brings you up to a level and then it's a case of always being ready.

"With all the injuries we've had this year, it probably just gives you belief that you may get an opportunity – more so than you would normally – so we've all been training and preparing as if we're going to get a chance to play.

"When we've had those opportunities all the young players have stepped up massively this season which has been a huge plus.

"The manager is just trying to do things as normal, really. No matter what injuries we have we're always going to be able to put out a team that's capable of winning so we're just trying to focus on that."

Appearing in the Champions League and Premier League was big news back in Cork and Kelleher says he received a couple of text messages saying he had hit the headlines!

"There hasn't been an Irish player playing for Liverpool for a long while, so it was a big story back home. It was one of the main stories on the news and my mum and my girlfriend were texting me saying, 'You're on the news here!'. I was just happy that I made everyone proud and that everyone was buzzing for me."

The last Irish international to play for the Reds was one of his childhood heroes. Robbie Keane is the most capped player in the Republic's history as well as their all-time leading goalscorer.

"There were a few I admired," he reveals. "Robbie Keane and Shay Given were probably the two that you'd look up to in terms of being the biggest and the best.

"For me it was especially so with Shay Given as the goalkeeper, you'd look up to him. He was one of the best in the Premier League for a good few years. And, of course, Robbie Keane was a great goalscorer and a fantastic player."

Becoming a full international himself may well be in the offing in 2021 but Caoimhin says he hasn't really thought too much about what the future might bring.

"It's been such a whirlwind few weeks for me. Playing games in two of the biggest competitions in the world is priceless and you learn so much just from preparing for them and then playing in them. And if I'm given opportunities again, then I'll do my best to keep pushing.

"Liverpool is obviously one of the best clubs in the world at the moment, back where they belong winning titles and challenging in Europe. Since I came to the Academy they've gone all the way up to winning the Champions League and the Premier League, and so to be involved has been amazing and hopefully the club can stay at these levels now.

"I just want to keep going and be the best I can be."



THREE GAMES, THREE SAVES

Ajax (home): with time ticking away and the Reds looking to preserve a 1-0 win which would see them top their Champions League group, Kelleher produces a superb point-blank save to deny Ajax's veteran centre-forward Klaas-Jan Huntelaar. Winger Antony swings in a cross from the right and Huntelaar meets it with a powerful header from just outside the six-yard box. Kelleher shows his instincts by clawing the ball behind for a corner.



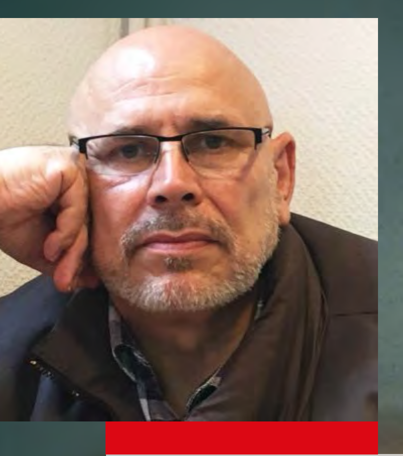
Wolves (home): Kelleher keeps a clean-sheet at Anfield for the second time in six nights with a crucial intervention at 0-0. Adama Traore lays the ball back to fellow winger Daniel Podence, who takes a touch inside the box before attempting to chip the Liverpool keeper. Kelleher's positioning enables him to rush across his goal before pawing the ball to safety with his right hand, aided by an acrobatic dive. His efforts are warmly applauded by the returning Liverpool fans behind him on the Kop.



Midtjylland (away): The goalkeeper ensures the Reds come away from Denmark with a draw when he makes another fine reaction save to deny the home side's captain Erik Sviatchenko. The centre-back produces a powerful header as he meets a corner but Kelleher reacts smartly to push the ball to safety.



“A generous and honourable man”



A personal tribute to Gerard Houllier from European football journalist and former Liverpool Echo writer, Ric George

I’ll admit I was shocked the first time it happened. “Ric, it’s Gerard.” “Gerard?” I checked my watch. It was 1.15 am. “Did I wake you?” Of course he did. Me – and my wife whom I had to reassure there was no cause for alarm.

“Is something wrong?” I asked. “I’m writing my team-talk. I need some help.” Not with the content, let me stress. Despite his excellent English there were occasions when Gerard would require assistance with a turn of phrase. Even in the early hours.

I don’t know how much work that managers put into their pre-match speech, but Gerard’s were penned meticulously in different coloured ink – and at all times of the day. That, basically, summed him up. He would pay great attention to detail and he would work every hour God sent – a task, I suppose, made easier by his being an insomniac.

There were other nocturnal phone-calls but the subsequent ones featured no introduction. He would get straight to the point. I’d pick up the receiver and hear: “I’m not happy with your article!”

My relationship with Gerard dates back to 1986 when I recognised him and his great friend Arsene Wenger on the stairs inside Anfield. I thought a good way to start my new career at the *Liverpool Echo* would be to interview the former Walton school teacher who had just led Paris Saint-Germain to their first league title and who, in only his late thirties, was already being tipped for the top.

We met for lunch the following week at PSG’s training ground and spoke all afternoon about English football, in particular his love and admiration for Liverpool FC.

Neither then, nor many years later, did either of us believe our paths would cross again on Merseyside.

By the time they did, Gerard had long taken me into his confidence. However, he never gave me a ‘scoop’ out of respect for my colleagues. For me, such stories would have to be sourced elsewhere.

Trust and loyalty did not go unrewarded, for he was a generous and honourable man who would regularly and sincerely ask about my family and if there was anything he could do, knowing that my dad was in ill-health.

Put simply, if you didn’t like him you didn’t know him.

One of my most cherished memories is from 2001, which was Gerard’s and one of Liverpool’s finest years. While the UEFA Cup was the most prestigious of that treble haul, Gerard would acknowledge the League Cup as the most significant, for he was convinced it would lead to other honours.

He had promised my dad that if his Liverpool side were victorious against Birmingham City, he would personally drive the trophy to his house in Formby. He kept his word, insisting that I take the wheel of his Jaguar for the journey back to Melwood in order that he could ‘power nap’.

Today the workaholic insomniac can finally get some rest.

May he sleep peacefully.



MERCI


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Houllier
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LIVERPOOL FC
ET LA GRANDEUR
NEIL 'YOZZA' HUGHES

GERARD

Some of the many, many tributes paid to the former Liverpool manager whom we lost late last year





Tom Werner, LFC chairman: "On behalf of John, Mike and myself, we offer our sincere condolences to Isabelle and all of Gerard's family. We mourn together one of Liverpool's great managers.

"Gerard was both respected and beloved. He transformed Liverpool during his time with the club, and it was always a treat to be in his company. Rest in peace, Gerard."

Jürgen Klopp: "When I arrived here, one of the first messages I received – and I didn't even know he had my number – was from Gerard Houllier.

"I know he had other clubs, worked for other clubs, was successful with other clubs, but the way he described it, Liverpool was his club, his real club where he probably felt still connected more than any other clubs.

"He was really supportive from the first day; between now and then, always messages came in after big games, big defeats, big wins and all these kind of things. In between, Gerard really texted and told me, 'That was right...that was wrong...I know the situation...' and all this kind of stuff.

"He was a really, really, really nice and gentle person. I miss him now already. Maybe the only good thing you can say in the moment is he will never be forgotten here."

LFC matchday programme: "Everyone at Liverpool FC is deeply saddened by the passing of former manager Gerard Houllier, at the age of 73.

"In September 1969, while working in the city as an assistant at Alsop Comprehensive School as he pursued a career in teaching, Gerard stood on the Kop and watched the 'Bill Shankly Boys' beat Dundalk 10-0 in the European Fairs Cup. Just under 30 years later, initially working alongside Roy Evans, he was appointed as manager of Liverpool Football Club.

"'I suppose going to the game was a touch of destiny', he later recalled. 'What impressed me first of all was the atmosphere inside the stadium. We were on the Kop, and it was fantastic to see the unconditioned support of the fans'.

"Houllier took sole charge of the Reds in November 1998 and set about revolutionising LFC. He brought in players such as Sami Hyypia, Stephane Henchoz, Vladimir Smicer and Didi Hamann and integrated them with local lads Steven Gerrard, Jamie Carragher, Robbie Fowler, Michael Owen and Danny Murphy.

"Adding the experience of Gary McAllister was a touch of genius and in season 2000/01 the Reds won an unprecedented treble of UEFA Cup, FA Cup and League Cup, while also qualifying for the Champions League. The Charity Shield and UEFA Super Cup soon followed.

"Later that year, after being taken ill during half-time of a game against Leeds United, Gerard required a life-saving heart-bypass. He returned in 2002 on a famous European night against AS Roma.

"He led the Reds to another League Cup success in 2003 and although he left Anfield in 2004, he also oversaw the rebuilding of Melwood, while seven of his signings started the glorious 2005 Champions League final in Istanbul.

"He will forever be remembered as the manager who modernised Liverpool FC and to Kopites as the man from France who made us dance in Cardiff and Dortmund.

"Allez allez, Gerard Houllier."



Sir Kenny Dalglish: "Very sad news about Gerard Houllier. He was a gentleman and a great footballing person. I enjoyed his company many times. His legacy at LFC will forever be appreciated, respected and never forgotten. Marina and I offer our sincere condolences to his family."

Roy Evans: "Incredibly sad news hearing of the passing of Gerrard Houllier. A gentleman I have the greatest respect for and what he achieved at Liverpool Football Club. Condolences to his family. RIP."

Phil Thompson: "I'm absolutely devastated and it's a very sad day for the football club. Gerard was everything to me and I will miss him dearly.

"It was six years since I had been at Liverpool, when I was previously reserve-team manager. To get the call back in 1998 and the opportunity to work with Gerard as his assistant was just incredible.

"I had only met him a couple of weeks before, for 15 minutes when Liverpool were playing Valencia in the UEFA Cup. I remember the great Tom Saunders and his words when Roy Evans resigned and he said: 'Bring back Phil Thompson!' My first words to the board of directors were: 'How does Gerard Houllier feel about this?' They said: 'He is more than delighted to have you back and we've told him what you mean to this club and how you can work well together.'

"Gerard knew of my footballing past and, lo and behold, we had such a great relationship. He used to say to me: 'Phil, I used to stand on the Kop and watch you in that great Liverpool side!' So you can imagine me feeling quite humble.

"He was just so warm and generous, and he did find the right words to always make you feel special, and if you felt special then you would play better, do better and communicate better.

"We found it difficult when we first came in to change the mentality of everything and bring discipline, which was one of the big things Gerard wanted. But we did bring discipline and a state-of-the-art training complex and trophies.

"Gerard was my colleague, my boss and my friend. After all our conversations and every time we spoke since we left the football club, I'd always say, 'Love you loads, boss!' It was that touch we had between each other. We were different – I was the bad cop and he was the good guy and it worked.

"I thank Gerard for giving me the opportunity to come back and win trophies for our football club. We had been in the doldrums for too long and he wanted to establish us again. There's no doubt that Gerard turned the club around and he felt he had left the club in a better state than what he'd took over. What Gerard did for this football club should never be forgotten."

Sammy Lee: "Gerard was a family man and he was very close to his family and he also considered Liverpool Football Club and the fans to be part of his family.

"As a coach he meant everything to me – he actually transformed my method of coaching. Gerard was always very generous with his time and with his knowledge.

"It's not being disrespectful to anybody who was there beforehand, but Gerard came in and radically reformed the place. He brought it up-to-speed, he knew the history of the club and he 'got' the people very, very much. He got the city, he got what the fans were looking for, he understood them."





Steven Gerrard: "Yesterday was a really tough day for myself and Gary McAllister. Gerard obviously played a huge part in both our careers, and also our lives. So the news was really difficult to take. He was a special man, a caring man, a loving man – more than just a manager.

"Throughout your career, different people look after you and shape you in your younger days. Steve Heighway, Hugh McAuley, Dave Shannon, for example, and then they pass you on to the first-team staff, which was Gerard Houllier, Phil Thompson and Sammy Lee, who did an incredible job for me.

"Gerard as at the forefront of that in terms of shaping me into a better player, into a better person, into a better leader. So I've got an awful lot to thank the man for and I'm finding it really hard to come to terms with it."

Gary McAllister: "He was my manager at Liverpool and I was his assistant at Villa, but deeper than that, he became a good friend. An all-round good man.

"He put a lot of trust in myself to come to Liverpool at my age, so we had a good friendship and a good understanding. He was a very calm man, very studious as well – everything was meticulous in its organisation. He brought belief to a group of players – that's what you want from a leader and your manager. It was a pleasure going into Melwood every day working with the guy.

"He had that special bond with the fans. That may have been due to the fact he'd spent some time working in Liverpool, so he knew the people and the love that came off the terraces and what it meant on the red side of Liverpool. You could see that with the songs they sang."

Jamie Carragher: "For me, he will be remembered as one of the biggest influences on my career and one of the biggest reasons why I played my whole career at Liverpool.

"He was adamant at the start, when I first came in, that I had to change my ways – not just me. British players, the way we did things, had to move with the times – the game was changing, it was getting faster. Some people didn't listen but some people did. I'm just thankful that I listened to Gerard Houllier in those early years because without him I don't think I'd have played for Liverpool for that long and enjoyed my career so much as well. I owe him everything, really.

"He was someone in football – and there's not many, I must say – I always kept in contact with, even though we weren't in contact on a daily basis like we were as player and manager. Always loved bumping into him, seeing him at different games around the world. He was just an absolute football fanatic.

"The first foreign manager was such a big thing, the first time the club had come away from the famous Boot Room which had dominated English football. There was a lot of scrutiny on him at that time. We got back to being what Liverpool should always be: a team which competes for trophies, wins trophies and has a legacy and name in Europe.

"It was Gerard Houllier and that team in that era that got Liverpool back on the map in Europe."

Robbie Fowler: "Gerard Houllier: 'Generosity always pays off. Generosity in your effort, in your work, in your kindness, in the way you look after people and take care of people. In the long run, if you are generous with a heart, and with humanity, it always pays off'. An achiever of great things. RIP Boss."

Michael Owen: "Absolutely heartbroken to hear that my old boss, Gerard Houllier, has sadly passed away. A great manager and a genuinely caring man."

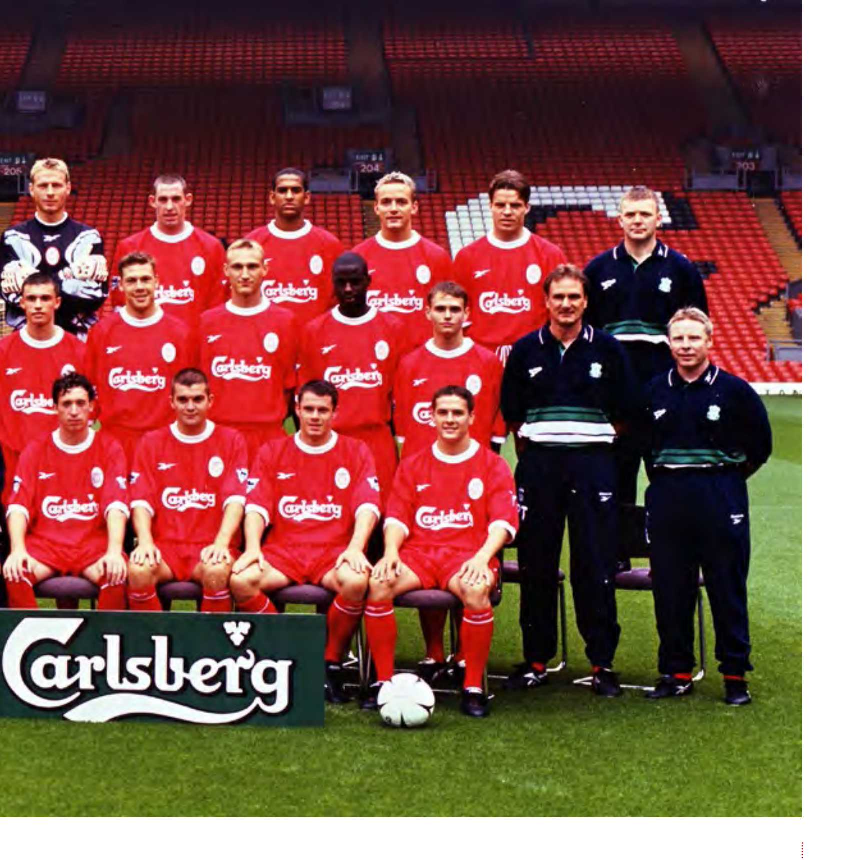
Emile Heskey: "Such sad news to hear my teacher, my mentor, someone I could pick up the phone to and ask for advice and who would be happy to give it to me, has passed away. You did so much and are still doing so much to guide me on my pathway. My condolences to the family."

Danny Murphy: "This sums up Houllier. The first trophy we won, I played every round in the League Cup and scored two in the semi at home – and then I did my medial ligament. I only tweaked it, but I couldn't play in the final and back then there were only medals for the lads who got stripped.

"We won on penalties, luckily. We shouldn't have won but we did and you're celebrating without really being too involved because you haven't played. I didn't get a medal and I thought: it's not the end of the world – I'm not that big on medals anyway. He said, 'You haven't got a medal, have you?' I said no. So he took his off and gave it to me, there and then – he had that touch of class.

"Big smile, warm, charismatic, big hugs – that's how I remember him."





Jamie Redknapp: "Incredibly sad news to hear of the passing of Gerard Houllier. A man that did an amazing job for Liverpool Football Club and for football as a whole. My thoughts and prayers go out to his family. I will never forget the day he gave me the Liverpool captaincy, the greatest honour of my career. RIP Gerard."

Vegard Heggem: "I'm very saddened by the news of Gerard Houllier's passing. I will forever be grateful to him for the faith he showed in me and the opportunities I was given. My thoughts go out to his family and friends."

Sami Hyypia: "Sad to hear Gerard Houllier passed away. The football world has lost an absolute gentleman and lover of the sport today! The man who had faith in me, to bring me to Liverpool FC and gave me confidence to become who I am right now, is no longer with us. Lots of strength to his family. RIP. YNWA."

Didi Hamann: "He was somebody who influenced many of us on all different levels and he was such a caring man. He gave me the chance to join Liverpool, so I will be forever grateful to him. He became a friend to so many of us and that's why it's so devastating to hear this news.

"My love for this football club is mostly owed to Gerard Houllier. I came to Liverpool in 1999 with five or six others. There was some tremendous English talent here, all young players, and I found a club which was run by him like a family – and he treated everybody the same. He transformed the whole club on a personal level and on a football level and made people appreciate again what the club is about.

"Without Gerard Houllier, we wouldn't have won the European Cup in 2005. He brought Jerzy Dudek to the club. You look at Sami Hyypia, who was unknown when he first came here. Jamie Carragher, Steven Gerrard. Vladimir Smicer came on and scored a goal and also a penalty.

"Gerard saw himself as an honorary Scouser and he would always class Liverpool as his spiritual home."

Sander Westerveld: "With Gerard, I had the best and the most success in my whole career. I have to be grateful to him and that's why I am, and only full of love for him.

"He was genuinely nice and you can see that with the posts on social media. It's not only 'Rest in peace, boss' – everybody has written a story about him. That's exactly the same for me as well.

"He gave me all the confidence I needed. I was under a lot of pressure and he always gave me the feeling that I was the one for him. I'm really grateful to be part of history because of him."

Djimi Traore: "I'm devastated because we lost someone very important for world of football and very important for my career. He signed me for Liverpool when I was 18 and gave me an opportunity to play at Anfield Road and be a part of club history."

Igor Biscan: "A gentleman who was always willing to help, a person with a lot of empathy. From my experience, I could say that even during bad times, you struggle to have a person like this who understands you and tries to help you. It means a huge deal.

"This is how I will remember him: a really nice person. That's one of the greatest characteristics of any person. He will have a special place in my heart."

Jari Litmanen: "Sad news. Gerard brought me to Liverpool and had an important role by changing many things at the club – for example, bringing a more professional mentality to the dressing-room and players."

Gregory Vignal: "I was really close to Gerard. I said to him, 'Boss, I want to learn the [manager's] job – could you help me?' Since I stopped playing, every week I was with him on the phone. 'Boss, I want to try to be a really good manager like you were'.

"Gerard was 24 hours a day living and working for Liverpool. When he said something to the players, everybody was ready to listen. Sometimes when you are a manager, it depends how you speak and you have to use the right words at the right time to make an impact.

"It will take too long to speak about Gerard, but I would say a great man, a great desire, a lovely man, a family man. Sometimes you could have a phone-call and it was eight, nine, ten o'clock at night and it's, 'Gregory, how's the family?' When I had my first kids in Liverpool, he was the first one on the phone."

Jerzy Dudek: "A sad day. A great manager, gentleman, always with a smile! Thanks to you, I was able to play for the greatest club in the world! God, look after him well because he deserves it. We will miss you, Gerard Houllier."

Chris Kirkland: "He was a brilliant manager but he was an incredible human being and he's going to be sorely missed. He gave me my dream. I've always been a Liverpool fan and he signed me, so I'll always owe him massively.

"He had this knack of knowing if there was something not quite right. He could come up and put his arm around you, asking if there was anything he could do. He was honest, true to his word. What he said, you believed him.

"He was just one of those people that when he speaks, you listen. His team-talks – before games or at half-time – everyone was just on the edge of their seat because every word had you transfixed. The world was lucky to have him in football."





John Arne Riise: "I'm devastated to hear that my former manager and good friend Gerard Houllier has passed away. A great manager and an even better person. Thank you for believing in me, boss. Your belief gave me my career. RIP my dear friend."

Harry Kewell: "Devastating news. Gerard was an incredible man and played a huge part in my life. My thoughts are with his friends and family. RIP Boss."

Stephen Wright: "So sad to hear the passing of Gerard Houllier. Will never forget you giving me the chance to play for LFC. A true gent to me and my family and absolute legend at the best club in the world. RIP Gerard. YNWA."

David Thompson: "I'm gutted to hear about Gerard. He was a good man and a top manager. YNWA."

Djibril Cisse: "Coach, I am very sad today. Due to you I could play for this wonderful club of Liverpool FC, and for that I thank you. Thank you for everything you have done for me and football. Peace to your soul. Merci, Mr Gerard Houllier."

Vladimir Smicer: "Thank you for all, Gerard."

Milan Baros: "RIP. Thanks for everything, Boss."

Ian Rush: "Devastated at the passing of Gerard Houllier. A true gentleman of the game, always put others first."

Mark Lawrenson: "RIP Gerard Houllier. One of the nicest men in the game."

Steve McMahon: "Gerard, you will always be remembered as one of the greatest managers at Liverpool. RIP and condolences to all your family. YNWA."

Robbie Keane: "RIP Gerard Houllier. Always the gentleman. My thoughts are with his family at this sad time."

Pepe Reina: "Deeply sad. My condolences to his family and friends. RIP Gerard Houllier."

Luis Garcia: "RIP Gerard Houllier. Legend, gentleman, gaffer."

Rafa Benitez: "Sad news about Houllier. He was a good manager and even a better person. Rest in peace."



Lucy Bronze, ex-Liverpool FC Women's defender: "He used to make a beeline for me after big games and put an arm round my shoulder. I think it was the Scouser in him that attracted him to the northern English player in me. For someone like him to even spend a small amount of time with me, give me advice and to come and watch my England games at the World Cup as well was phenomenal. He is a huge loss and I'm just thankful for everything he did for me."

Peter Moore, former LFC chief-executive: "Absolutely devastated to hear the tragic news of Gerard's passing. I had the privilege of spending time with him on several occasions during my tenure at LFC. He loved the club, adored the city, and was proud to call himself an adopted Scouser. YNWA."

Noël Le Graët, French Football Federation president: "It is with great emotion and deep sadness that I learned of the death of Gerard Houllier. French football is losing one of its greatest technicians, and the French Federation one of its most loyal servants.

"Gerard Houllier has distinguished himself at all levels of football. In the amateur world as a player and then as a coach, in the professional world as a coach of renowned clubs, in the Federation as national technical director and coach of the France team.

"Beyond his unanimously recognised technical qualities, Gerard Houllier was a great teacher, open-minded, warm, accessible, deeply human. French football owes him a lot. On behalf of the Federation, I address our heartfelt thoughts and our most sincere condolences to his family and loved ones."

Nasser Al-Khelaifi, Paris Saint-Germain chairman: "Gerard Houllier's passing touches me greatly and I know the whole Paris Saint-Germain family feels profound sadness, from the fans to former players and all those who work with the club.

"Paris Saint-Germain will always remember Gerard Houllier, who was in the dug-out at the time of the club's first league title in 1986 before he went on to take on major roles in French and European football."

Olympique Lyonnais: "The football world has lost a legend and Olympique Lyonnais has lost a friend. Gerard will be missed terribly. All of our thoughts are with his family."

Aston Villa FC: "All at Aston Villa are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Gerard Houllier, our manager during the 2010/11 season. Our thoughts are with Gerard's loved ones at this incredibly difficult time."

UEFA: "The European football community today mourns the loss of Gerard Houllier at the age of 73. A former coach of France, Paris Saint-Germain, Liverpool and Lyon, he was also an influential and much-respected UEFA technical observer and coaching expert. Rest in peace, Gerard."

FIFA: "We are saddened to learn of the passing of Gerard Houllier. Besides his outstanding work with the likes of Liverpool, Lyon and France's national team, Gerard provided invaluable input to FIFA's technical study group."

Everton FC: "Our thoughts are with the family of former France, Liverpool, PSG and Aston Villa manager Gerard Houllier, as well as those close to him on Merseyside. RIP Gerard."

Manchester United FC: "Everyone at MUFC joins the football world in expressing our sadness at the loss of Gerard Houllier. We send our condolences to his loved ones."

Sir Alex Ferguson: "Gerard became a really good friend during his time at Liverpool. We remained great friends after he left and he was always a great ally to have. He was always great company and I will miss him dearly. He was a true gentleman."

Pep Guardiola: "On behalf of all at Manchester City, our deep condolences to Gerard Houllier's family. He was an incredible, lovely person when I met him at UEFA meetings, or when we played Lyon, or when I met him as a player and manager. It's sad news for all world football."

Jesse Marsch, RB Salzburg manager: "Gerard Houllier was one of the best people I have ever known. He was a dear friend and an incredible supporter of mine, especially in the toughest moments. I will miss you dearly, mon ami.

"For such an accomplished football person, he cared so much for people and relationships. So many positive things will be written about Gerard, but it's impossible to capture his love and warmth in words. He was a father and mentor to so many, and I'm so thankful to have known him."

Phil McNulty, BBC Sport: "Shortly after his arrival, the Liverpool Echo was running a promotional campaign which involved plastering large images of journalists on the back of buses, with inevitable consequences and insults. Houllier once greeted me at Anfield with a smile and the words, 'I pulled up behind your face at a set of traffic lights yesterday. It is not a good sight in real life, but at that size and while I am driving...are you trying to damage Liverpool Football Club?'"

Ken Rogers, former Liverpool Echo sport editor: "Gerard was a generous and intelligent football manager but more importantly an absolute gentleman. He knew I was a boyhood Evertonian, but we developed a real mutual respect and he turned down requests from all over the world to give me that much-sought-after exclusive first interview for the Echo as he continued his recovery from life-saving heart surgery.

"I was invited to his apartment in Sefton Park where his specialist suggested I could have just 15 minutes, but Gerard kept encouraging

one more question. He just wanted to keep talking about his determination to fight back, his LFC ambitions, the fans and his love for the city. After two hours I finally left with a notebook full of his hopes and dreams. A wonderful experience with an individual who thoroughly deserves his place in LFC's hall of fame."

Chris Bascombe, Daily Telegraph: "As a reporter covering Liverpool at the turn of the millennium, I was privileged to speak to Houllier virtually every working day between 2000 and 2004. The phone might ring at 7.30am or midnight if the Liverpool manager wished to chat football, praise or criticise a report or even check your health if for some reason you had not checked in with him. If working on a story or an interview, he was eager for the tone to be right, acutely aware of the power of the media, especially in Liverpool.

"In his emotional farewell to Liverpool in 2004 – the club demonstrating their gratitude even then by taking the unusual step of arranging a press-conference for a manager they had just fired – Houllier delivered what was then construed as a parting shot. 'If the club wants to go back to the 1970s and 80s, then fine – not with me', he said. There was no going back. Thanks to Houllier, Liverpool Football Club was in a position to stride ever onwards."

Cathy Long, 'GH' mosaic co-designer: "Feeling sad and emotional but proud today. Andy Knott and I designed the 'GH' mosaic and arranged it on the Kop for him when he was in hospital. He said he was 'deeply touched' and invited us to go see him when he recovered so he could thank us personally."

Spion Kop 1906: "Allez allez, allez allez, Gerard Houllier. RIP Gerard, thanks for the memories."

Peter Carney, LFC flag-maker: "Been to pay my respects to Gerard Houllier, a great Liverpudlian. Gerard reminded us and proved what a great club we were and are. Gerard really did 'let the Reds out'. In great style. Thank you, Gerard Houllier. Always in our heart."



Gerard Houllier, in his own words: "There are four strong pictures that I will take away from Anfield with me, although I have so many great memories to remember from my time here...

"Firstly, I will never forget Michael Owen scoring the winner against Arsenal in the FA Cup final. We used to tease Michael that his left foot wasn't very good, but that goal not only meant we'd won a trophy but also proved just how much he'd improved himself as a player.

"The second memory is of watching the Kop display the 'GH' mosaic on television at home before the game against Manchester United while I was recovering from my illness. That was as probably as emotional for me as the reception I got from the fans and Fabio Capello during my comeback against Roma in the Champions League.

"Finally, I have great memories of Gary McAllister receiving the man-of-the-match award from Johan Cruyff at the end of the UEFA Cup final against Alaves in Dortmund. The reaction of the fans that night in Germany is something I'll never forget. We were together that night all singing *You'll Never Walk Alone*.

"Nobody can ever take away from me those memories. The fantastic times I've had with the fans, the players and the staff will always be with me."



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MISSY BO'S MISSION

The local girl who once played football with Curtis Jones is aiming to establish herself in the Reds first team this season

Curtis Jones, Rhys Williams, Neco Williams and Leighton Clarkson aren't the only youngsters who have been starring for the Liverpool first-team this season.

A contemporary of the quartet, Missy Bo Kearns has been making the most of her opportunities in the Liverpool FC Women's side and impressing everyone around the camp with her progress.

Kearns was given her Reds first-team debut by Jepson in March 2019 when the then 17-year-old replaced Laura Coombs in an FA WSL fixture against Chelsea at Prenton Park.

She scored her first senior goal last season when she showed trademark confidence netting direct from a free-kick in a Continental Cup tie at Blackburn Rovers. And that same cup competition was the context for her first full start in November when she produced a player-of-the-match display in a derby date at Everton that saw the Reds narrowly edged out 1-0 at Walton Hall Park.

She ended 2020 with 14 first-team appearances to her name – including a full league debut at Durham the Sunday before Christmas – and has delighted Jepson with her development and ability to perform no matter whom the opponent.

"That's the greatest thing about Bo," says the Liverpool manager. "She literally doesn't care who she's up against – she'll always want the ball and she's brave.

"When we played Manchester City in the Continental Cup we saw Rose Lavelle [a World Cup winner with the USA in 2019] get the ball and Bo went through her and pushed her off it. I think that's just Bo Kearns for you.

"She's a Scouser through-and-through, she'll run through a brick wall for the badge and she'll always want to win for the badge.

"I think we're going to see her have a fantastic career in football if she keeps going the way she is."

Missy Bo's confidence, willingness to get on the ball and desire to stamp her personality on matches is reminiscent of the way fellow midfielder Curtis Jones has made such an impact in the men's senior side.

The pair know each other well and actually used to play in the same side as youngsters. Former LFC Academy striker Bobby Duncan, now with Derby County, was another team-mate at the time.

"I am from Allerton and grew up there with my mum and dad," she says. "I played together with Curtis and Bobby for Mossley Hill. It was the local team by mine and all three of us have ended up doing well.

"It's been great to see Curtis doing so well with the first-team, scoring the winner in a big Champions League game against Ajax and things like that.

"It's good seeing him get the opportunity because he's good enough and now everyone else gets to see that he's good enough. Hopefully I will also be trusted and get more opportunities. That's my main focus now: to be playing more."

Missy Bo closely follows the men's team and regularly attends games at Anfield whenever the opportunity allows. Indeed when 2,000 fans were given the green light to return for the match against Wolves last month, she was one of the lucky supporters selected in the ballot!

After helping the Reds to a 4-0 victory over Crystal Palace in front of a small number of supporters at Prenton Park earlier that afternoon, she showered, changed and headed to L4!

She says playing in front of fans again was especially welcome, particularly given the fact that Liverpool FC Women had last played in front of their own supporters against Arsenal at Chester back in February 2020.

"I think its brilliant. It was just a shame that more couldn't come because of the situation, but it's more than what we've had and it made a difference. When we scored, you could hear the players' names being sung and it was good to have my family back in the stands.

"It's just the atmosphere. It's so much better than we could have on our own and hopefully more and more fans will be able to come back in the coming months."

Missy Bo says playing football was almost inevitable for her given the huge interest in the game among family and friends. "I was always at my nan's, who lives not far away, when I was little and always a family girl spending a lot of time with my cousins and stuff.

"I've got loads of boys around me and my family and they were all interested in football so I became involved because there was nothing else to do and it turned out that I was alright at it!

"I first started playing for a team when I was five or six and then I signed for Liverpool when I was eight, so it moved fast. The first season I got signed, Vicky was my manager so I've known her since my first ever year at Liverpool."

Despite Jepson overseeing her development through age-group teams at the Centre of Excellence and Development Squad as well as England representative teams, Missy Bo says she expects no favours from the manager as her career continues to progress.

"Yes we've got a good relationship but I know I've got to be earning everything. My debut, I had to earn. My professional contract, I had to earn.



Interview: William Hughes



I'VE JUST GOT TO TRY AND BREAK INTO THE TEAM NOW AND DO EVERYTHING I CAN WHEN I'M GETTING THE MINUTES

"I'm sure she's not going to give me extra chances just because she's known me a long time and I like it the way it is. I've just got to keep learning and showing her what I can do and knock people out of my way who are in front of me to play in the team and that's my main focus now."

Bo adds that learning from players such as vice-captain and fellow midfielder Rachel Furness over the past 12 months has helped her push on and set her standards even higher.

"I think because we're the same position it's good to have someone like that to look up to, but now my focus is on becoming as good as her and better. I've got to take what she's done and try and do that and more for the club. She's my role-model of where I want to be plus more."

The fact that Kearns is handed set-piece duties whenever she is on the field speaks volumes for her abilities on the ball. She says it's something she has always had in her game.

"Since I was younger I've been taking free-kicks and practising them. I think that's one of my abilities. I'm a technical player so I think that's why I get trusted to take the set-pieces and so on when I come on.

"I think you've just got to be brave on the field. It's the same in general play. It doesn't matter who you're up against, if you believe in yourself then it doesn't matter. You're trusting your own ability and that they won't get the ball off you."

The teenager had a spell on loan at Blackburn Rovers during the second half of last season but saw her game-time limited by injury. "I think it was a good move at the time as I just wanted to be playing, but I had an injury which was frustrating.

"All I want to be doing is playing matches because I'm training all the time and I just want to put everything into game-situations. Hopefully if I keep working hard it will come.

"I've just got to try and break into the team now and do everything I can when I'm getting the minutes. I'm starting to fit in and gel with the girls now and I think you can start to see that I'm not far off being a regular, if I keep doing what I'm doing."

The 2-0 reverse at Durham in Liverpool's final match of 2020 left them in third position in the FA Women's Championship with nine games to play. Six of those last nine are at home with this month's clash against leaders Leicester City looking like a pivotal fixture. Only the champions earn promotion to the FA Women's Super League.

Missy Bo insists that everyone in the Liverpool squad is concentrating only on themselves. "Our focus isn't on other teams. We just know that we've got to get three points in every game we play and if we do that we will be in a good place.

"That's our main focus every time we go out onto the pitch and I'm really looking forward to the rest of the season."



FA WOMEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP (AS AT 1 JAN 2021)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Leicester	11	8	2	1	32	13	19	26
Durham	11	7	4	0	19	8	11	25
Liverpool	11	6	3	2	19	8	11	21
Sheff Utd	11	5	4	2	20	8	12	19

GAMES AGAINST FELLOW TOP FOUR SIDES TO COME:

LIVERPOOL
17 Jan Leicester City (H)
25 Apr Sheffield Utd (A)

LEICESTER CITY
10 Jan Sheffield Utd (H)
17 Jan Liverpool (A)
14 Feb Durham (A)

DURHAM
14 Feb Leicester City (H)
28 Mar Sheffield Utd (H)

SHEFFIELD UTD
10 Jan Leicester City (A)
28 Mar Durham (A)
25 Apr Liverpool (H)




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JAN/FEB

WHAT'S ON



RELENTLESS

The Reds are set to play six Premier League games in 21 days between mid-January and early February with both Manchester clubs visiting Anfield. Four of those half-dozen matches will take place in L4 with a couple of trips to the capital in-between.

It all starts on Sunday 17 January with the first encounter of the season against Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's Manchester United, themselves pushing for the title. The following midweek the Reds play the first of two Thursday-night games in January when Burnley make the short journey from East Lancashire.

Two games in London follow with Liverpool at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium the following Thursday 28th and West Ham United on Sunday 31st. The Reds beat both teams 2-1 at Anfield earlier in the campaign.

The non-stop schedule continues when Brighton & Hove Albion pay a visit on Wednesday 3 February 2021 before Manchester City provide the opposition the following weekend, again at Anfield.

JAN/FEB

WHAT'S ON

HOME SWEET HOME?



Liverpool FC Women have two crunch home league fixtures against teams from either end of the table as they bid to win promotion from the FA Women's Championship.

Six of the Reds' remaining nine league fixtures will take place at Prenton Park, home of Tranmere Rovers, starting with the visit of struggling London Bees on Sunday 10 January 2021. The Reds won the corresponding game 3-0 at The Hive in September thanks to second-half goals from Melissa Lawley, Rinsola Babajide and Rachel Furness.

A week later league leaders Leicester City pay a visit for what could prove to be a pivotal clash. Liverpool were edged out 2-1 when the sides met in October.

ALL THOSE YEARS AGO...

ANNIVERSARIES

5 years since Jürgen Klopp broke his glasses after a Liverpool winner at Carrow Road!
13 years since Martin Skrtel signed for Liverpool FC on 11 January 2008
24 years since Jamie Carragher scored his first Liverpool FC goal on 18 January 1997
102 years since the great Reds boss Bob Paisley was born on 23 January 1919
13 years since Lucas scored his first goal for Liverpool FC on 26 January 2008
34 years since John Aldridge joined the Reds back on 27 January 1987

And it's **43** years since midfield maestro Graeme Souness made his Reds debut on 14 January 1978...

The Scot first pulled on a Liverpool jersey for a game at West Bromwich Albion and his impact in the years that followed would be immense. During his six full seasons at Anfield, the Reds won the league title five times.

"I heard of Liverpool's interest through Phil Boersma, a team-mate at Middlesbrough and former Liverpool player himself," Souness recalled. "Phil had a friend called Bob Rockliffe who had a petrol station in Knotty Ash. And Bob Paisley called in every morning to pick his horses – Bob would put the bets on for him – and he'd say: 'Tell Souness we want to buy him'.

"At the same time Leeds and Newcastle were



interested. Eventually Boro decided to sell me and I was told to go to a hotel in Yorkshire, so I was thinking it must be Leeds United. There were half-a-dozen people sat around a table and I recognised Bob Paisley right away. I was delighted."

The Reds paid the Teessiders a fee of £352,000 for the 24-year-old.

"At about ten to three before my first game, I said to Joe Fagan: 'Look I've been here a week now and nobody's said anything to me. What do you want me to do?' And he said: 'Son, we've paid all this money for you, and you're asking me how to play? Just get out there and play."

Lining up alongside Terry McDermott, Ray Kennedy and Ian Callaghan in midfield, he made a winning start with striker David Johnson scoring the only goal of the game at The Hawthorns.





BIRTHDAYS

Kamil Grabara 22 on 8 January
Lucas Leiva 34 on 9 January
Ray Houghton 59 on 9 January
Emile Heskey 43 on 11 January
Alvaro Arbeloa 38 on 17 January
Phil Thompson 67 on 21 January
Jose Enrique 35 on 23 January
Pep Lijnders 38 on 24 January
Luis Suarez 34 on 24 January
Jamie Carragher 43 on 28 January
Peter Crouch 40 on 30 January
Curtis Jones 20 on 30 January





HE'S BIG, HE'S RED...

It's a happy 40th birthday on 30 January for football podcast king Peter Crouch, who only hung up his playing boots in July 2019 after a career which included a three-year spell with Liverpool. The striker was signed by Rafael Benitez just after the 2005 Champions League triumph and helped the Reds land a seventh FA Cup the season after. He also appeared in the 2007 re-match against AC Milan in Athens. Legend has it – seriously – that he wanted to call his second son Divock, after Liverpool's goalscorer in the 2019 final, but his wife wasn't having it!

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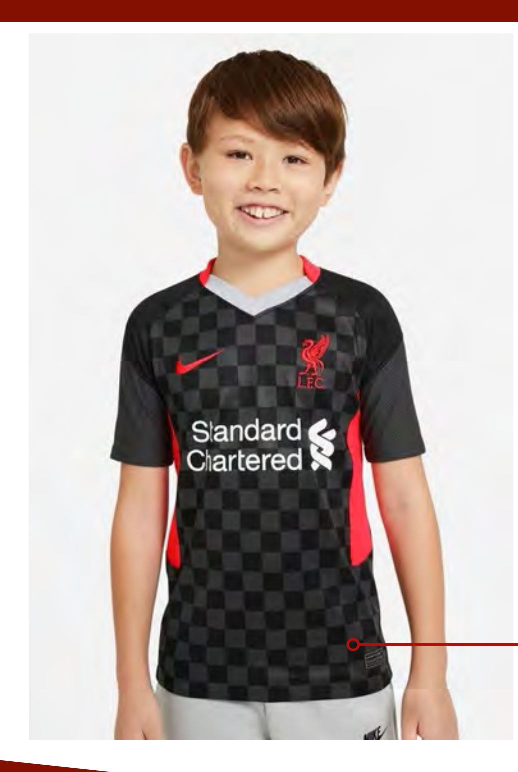
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Results & Fixtures 2020/21

		SCORE	TV	SCORERS
AUGUST				
Sat 29	Arsenal (CS, N)	1-1*	BT	Minamino (pens: Salah, Fabinho, Minamino, Jones)
SEPTEMBER				
Sat 12	**Leeds United (H)**	**4-3**	**Sky**	**Salah 3 (2 pens), Van Dijk**
Sun 20	Chelsea (A)	2-0	Sky	Mane 2
Thurs 24	Lincoln City (A, Carabao Cup 3)	7-2	Sky	Shaqiri, Minamino 2, Jones 2, Grujic, Origi
Mon 28	**Arsenal (H)**	**3-1**	**Sky**	**Mane, Robertson, Jota**
OCTOBER				
Thurs 1	**Arsenal (H, Carabao Cup 4)**	**0-0***	**Sky**	**(pens: Milner, Wijnaldum, Minamino, Jones)**
Sun 04	Aston Villa (A)	2-7	Sky	Salah 2
Sat 17	Everton (A)	2-2	BT	Mane, Salah
Wed 21	Ajax (UCL Matchday 1, A)	1-0	BT	Tagliafico (OG)
Sat 24	**Sheffield United (H)**	**2-1**	**Sky BO**	**Firmino, Jota**
Tue 27	**FC Midtjylland (UCL Matchday 2, H)**	**2-0**	**BT**	**Jota, Salah (pen)**
Sat 31	**West Ham United (H)**	**2-1**	**Sky**	**Salah (pen), Jota**
NOVEMBER				
Tue 03	Atalanta (UCL Matchday 3, A)	5-0	BT	Jota 3, Salah, Mane
Sun 08	Manchester City (A)	1-1	Sky	Salah (pen)
Sat 21	**Leicester City (H)**	**3-0**	**Sky**	**Evans (OG), Jota, Firmino**
Wed 25	**Atalanta (UCL Matchday 4, H)**	**0-2**	**BT**	
Sat 28	Brighton & Hove Albion (A)	1-1	BT	Jota
DECEMBER				
Tue 01	**Ajax (UCL Matchday 5, H)**	**1-0**	**BT**	**Jones**
Sun 06	**Wolverhampton Wanderers (H)**	**4-0**	**AP**	**Salah, Wijnaldum, Matip, Semedo (OG)**
Wed 09	FC Midtjylland (UCL Matchday 6, A)	1-1	BT	Salah
Sun 13	Fulham (A)	1-1	Sky	Salah (pen)
Wed 16	**Tottenham Hotspur (H)**	**2-1**	**AP**	**Salah, Firmino**
Sat 19	Crystal Palace (A)	7-0	BT	Firmino 2, Salah 2, Minamino, Mane, Henderson
Sun 27	**West Bromwich Albion (H)**	**1-1**	**Sky**	**Mane**
Wed 30	Newcastle United (A)	0-0	AP	
JANUARY				
Mon 04	Southampton (A)	0-1	Sky	
Fri 08	Aston Villa (FA Cup 3, A)		BT	
Sun 17	**Manchester United (H, 4.30pm)**		**Sky**	
Thu 21	**Burnley (H, 8pm)**		**Sky**	
Sat 23	(FA Cup 4)			
Thu 28	Tottenham Hotspur (A, 8pm)		BT	
Sun 31	West Ham United (A, 4.30pm)		Sky	
FEBRUARY				
Wed 03	**Brighton & Hove Albion (H)**			
Sat 06	**Manchester City (H)**			
Wed 10	(FA Cup 5)			
Sat 13	Leicester City (A)			
Tue 16	RB Leipzig (UCL R of 16 1 A, 8pm)		BT	
Sat 20	**Everton (H)**			
Sat 27	Sheffield United (A)			
MARCH				
Sat 06	**Fulham (H)**			
Wed 10	**RB Leipzig (UCL R of 16 2 H, 8pm)**		**BT**	
Sat 13	Wolverhampton Wanderers (A)			
Sat 20	**Chelsea (H)**			
Sat 20	(FA Cup 6)			
APRIL				
Sat 03	Arsenal (A)			
Tue 06/07	(UCL Q-F 1)		BT	
Sat 10	**Aston Villa (H)**			
Tue/Wed 13/14	(UCL Q-F 2)		BT	
Sat 17	Leeds United (A)			
Sat 17	(FA Cup S-F)			
Sat 24	**Newcastle United (H)**			
Tue/Wed 27/28	(UCL S-F 1)		BT	
MAY				
Sat 1	Manchester United (A)			
Tue/Wed 04/05	(UCL S-F 2)		BT	
Sat 08	**Southampton (H)**			
Tue 11	West Bromwich Albion (A)			
Sat 15	Burnley (A)			
Sat 15	(FA Cup final)			
Sun 23	**Crystal Palace (H)**			
Sat 29	(UCL final)		BT	



All fixtures subject to change. *lost 5-4 on pens

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NEIL MELLOR

When I first arrived at Melwood there were cans of pop in the fridges and chocolate for us to eat. They all disappeared. Gerard Houllier made Liverpool more professional

I was shocked when I heard that Gerard Houllier had passed away at the age of 73. He still felt young to me, so it was upsetting news and also brought a lot of memories flooding back.

Liverpool's Academy was very different compared to now when I was a young player there. The relationship between the Academy and first-team was strained, making it a lot harder for us to get to Melwood.

Our big opportunity was the old Liverpool Reserves team which, back then, was often a strong side. I remember playing games at Haig Avenue, Southport, alongside the likes of Gary McAllister, Jamie Redknapp and Markus Babbel, knowing that Gerard might be in the stand watching.

I felt those matches, and the Youth Cup, provided my chance to catch his eye and that because I was a young player coming through, rather than one of his signings, I had to really impress him. In 2001/02 I scored something like 56 goals. After that, Gerard invited me down to Melwood.

Liverpool has always prided themselves on bringing through homegrown players. Gerard had given Steven Gerrard and Stephen Wright their chances, and then it was myself, John Welsh and Jon Otsemobor who were in and around the first-team.

The first time I was on the bench was for a UEFA Champions League game away to Spartak Moscow. I was training with the first-team and the bonuses then were the equivalent of six month's wages to me. That made it a massive deal and Gerard knew how much it meant to me.

He gave me my debut against Ipswich Town at Anfield in the League Cup in December 2002. A month later, he gave me the nod to start the semi-final first leg against Sheffield United at Bramall Lane ahead of Michael Owen and Emile Heskey.

I was 20 at the time and that was a huge vote of confidence and trust from the manager in me. I got a goal – my first for Liverpool – which was a nice moment and although we didn't win on the night, we went through in the second leg.

The final was against Manchester United in Cardiff and Gerard could only name five subs. It wasn't like the Champions League final in Madrid when Jürgen had about 20 subs on the bench!

I remember Gerard telling me that he wanted to take me down to Cardiff to experience a cup final, but unless someone got injured I wouldn't be involved. He was honest and open about it, but made sure I felt part of it all the day before, in the dressing-room and afterwards.

He also ensured I got a League Cup winners' medal and that is something I'll always be grateful for. I may not have played in the final, but he wanted to reward my contribution along the way.



Gerard was a warm manager. He'd give you a confidence-boosting smile that said 'I like what you're doing,' but he also sent me on loan to West Ham to develop. I'd scored twice in a pre-season friendly at Aberdeen and thought I would be part of the first-team set-up in 2003/04, so I was disappointed to go out on loan. I matured a lot at West Ham, but by the time I came back Gerard had left Liverpool Football Club.

Ultimately, Gerard Houllier was a successful Liverpool manager. He brought trophies back to the football club and was Liverpool's first continental manager at a time when the game was changing with an influx of non-British or Irish players coming to the Premier League.

He was good at stopping cliques forming. At lunch he made us sit next to different team-mates from different nationalities and he also changed our diets. When I first arrived at Melwood there were cans of Coca-Cola, Sprite and Fanta in the fridges and Mars, Snickers, Twix and Kit-Kats for us to eat. They all disappeared. He made Liverpool more professional.

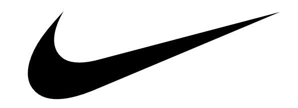
Personally, I will remember him as the man who enabled me to fulfil my dream of becoming a professional footballer. I'll always be eternally grateful that Gerard Houllier gave me my Liverpool debut, the opportunity to play at Anfield, wear the red shirt and score for this football club.

THANKS GERARD.

• Follow Neil on Twitter @NeilMellor33










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